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April 3, 2003

VIA HAND DELIVERY

Ms. Rini Ghosh
Section of Environmental Analysis
Surface Transportation Board
1925 K Street, N.W.
Washington, DC

**Re: Finance Docket No. 34284 -- Southwest Gulf Railroad Company --
Petition for Exemption from 49 U.S.C. § 10901 to Construct and
Operate a Rail Line In Medina County, Texas**

Dear Ms. Ghosh:

We recently forwarded to you, in response to a request that we received, a list of public contacts between Vulcan Materials Company/Southwest Gulf Railroad and members of the public. In addition, we are hereby forwarding a list of clippings of articles from local newspapers during the past few years that address the development of the quarry and, in many cases, construction of the rail line. We assume that this will provide you with some useful background on the nature of the issues that have been raised.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Respectfully,



David H. Coburn
Attorney for Southwest Gulf Railroad
Company

DHC:dj

cc: Jaya Zyman-Ponebshek
Darrell Brownlow

Finance Docket No. 34284

Southwest Gulf Railroad -- Petition for Exemption

Media Clippings

April 3, 2003

Your turn

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861
Email: anvil@hondo.net

1601 Ave. K
Fax: (830) 426-3348

Losses, gains occur during change

Dear Editor,

As a descendant of William Schweers and chairwoman of the December open house held in his home in Quihi, I wish to respond to the letter written by Mrs. Alyne Fitzgerald (*Anvil Herald*, Jan. 16). I am painfully aware of the Fitzgeralds' objections to the quarry and rail spur. Some, but certainly not all, of their objections may have validity. Sadly, their choice to use obfuscation, confrontation and confusion as allies prevents us from working together to find solutions.

I sympathize with those who object to change and development in Texas' disappearing rural areas. After all, my goal is to preserve a small bit of that very same Texas heritage. Losses, as well as gains, occur during times of change. In the end, it is up to us to make sure the "gains" outweigh the "losses." We need to preserve what we cherish from the past and adjust to the changes necessary to give our children what they require for the future.

Mrs. Fitzgerald is correct when she writes that Vulcan's offer to return the homes and help with the restoration is generous. They were under no obligation to do either. To the contrary of Mrs. Fitzgerald's statement, Vulcan did

not seek out members of the Schweers family on which to unload their "liability." Schweers family members went to Vulcan with the proposal. It was family members who worked to set up the family foundation, not Vulcan.

For the life of me, I can not see the relevance of Mrs. Fitzgerald's silly and sarcastic tirade about Mr. Ransdell's singling out the historical significance of the Schweers' property. After all, he was invited by the Schweers family to speak about the future of their historical, family properties. The program and speaker, in no way disparaged the historical significance of other families or their properties. To suggest such a thing is shameful.

Perhaps Mrs. Fitzgerald was most outrageous when she attempted to pit cousin against cousin. Every effort was made to invite all family and friends to the open house. Apparently, I was so successful I even reached a few who fall in neither category. Some of us may not live in the county, but our roots and our families are there. As an outsider, perhaps she is not aware that we are a family strong enough in our respect and love for each other to allow for differences of opinion.

Carol Carpenter
Boerne

Why hire a city manager?

Dear Editor:

I have not had the privilege to meet Mr. John Vidaurri. But I had just begun to like what he was do-

city council tries to tell him how to run it. He is the professional. In that case, why hire one? Why don't they do it themselves? We

Hondo
Anvil
Herald
Letter
To the
Editor

2/6/03

Hondo Anvil Herald
2/6/03

Everything comes with a price 1-16-03

Dear Editor:

My husband is a descendant of both the early Schweers and Gerdes settlers in Medina County.

Our first awareness of the gift of the land surrounding the old Schweers' homesteads was at the open house held at the William Schweers home. Everyone, including me, was excited about receiving the property and the assistance of Vulcan in the restoration. But, my first reaction was, "nothing comes without a price tag in this world".

into what had transpired and why regarding the transaction, so it was all completely new to me. However, I instinctively knew there was a trade-off somewhere down the line.

We live in San Antonio just on

When they blast, it literally, not figuratively, shakes the walls of our home. Some property owners have complained of cracks and pictures actually falling off the walls.

There is no one that is a more avid genealogist and for preservation of historical spots than myself. Therefore, there is a division of priorities here that must be carefully considered by those who live anywhere near the site of any future quarry.

Deloris Wynne-Riley
San Antonio

Ref. 2

Vulcan's good neighbor policy

Dear Editor: 1-16-03

Vulcan Materials Regional President, Tom Ransdell, announced at the Schweers Christmas open house that they are still considering the proposed Quihi quarry project, with the connecting railroad spur that will go through the Quihi Creek.

Vulcan purchased the Schweers property under the name of Med-Tex Lands, Inc., for the purpose of placing a six-mile railroad spur on it to connect their proposed 50-year meat quarry (1700+ acres) with the existing Union Pacific Railroad at Dunlay. On this property are two old homes from the 1800s which are in very bad repair. These homes are located at the Quihi Creek on CR 365. Vulcan has generously offered to give back to the Schweers family the two old homesteads and help them with some of the costs. They have created the Schweers Historical Foundation to facilitate this transfer. This achieves two things.

Mr. Ransdell remarked that he was amazed that the Schweers homes had such a great history. Well, duh! This whole area is loaded with history. Mr. Ransdell, why don't you buy the book *Medina County History*, written by the proud descendants themselves? You will then learn that this entire Quihi area, not just the Schweers property, has an important history. Many grandchildren and great-grandchildren live on the same land as their ancestors, some even in the same houses. They want to continue to do so. They are

proud of this history and land and homes too. Their ancestors would turn over in their graves if they knew what Vulcan had in store for the land they fought so hard to get and keep.

Vulcan again reiterated how "good they are to the community, how they would be good neighbors."

One (from out-of-town) remarked how lovely it would be to have a train through here. Apparently, she didn't know that would not be cute little train, or even an ordinary train.

We who actually live here do not want a railroad bringing 300 cars every day, over 2,000 cars per week, uncovered, loaded with dusty limestone, through the Quihi area. Residents with lung problems and allergies have enough to contend with—mountain cedar and other dusts and pollens. The wind comes from all directions at various times. This aspect of this proposed project is only one of the problems that this project would create. I could go on and on about the flooding this would cause and many other problems.

Two years ago, 112 land owners in the Quihi area placed a restrictive covenant on 9,528 acres of their land. This restriction prohibits any type of railroad on their land. This restriction is now a part of their deeds. Mr. Ransdell, you know this.

Alyne Fitzgerald
Quihi

Hondo
Anvil
Herald
Letters
To the
Editor

1/16/03

Ref. 3

Ref. 4

Hondo
Anvil
Herald
Letters
To the
Editor

1/09/03

Your turn 1-9-03

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861
Email: anvil@hondo.net

1601 Ave. K
Fax: (830) 426-3348

The Vulcanization process

Dear Editor:

Re: "Schweers family members plan open house ..." (*Anvil Herald*, Dec. 26).

In the referenced article, the Schweers Foundation remarks on the community and people-oriented nature of the Vulcan Material Company. Nothing could be further from the truth! The reason Vulcan Materials is so interested in the Schweers Foundation, buying animals at the livestock show, etc., is to push their agenda to have a mining quarry in Medina County. They don't care for the citizens of Medina County!

They know that mining 200 million tons of material from

Medina County will have adverse effects on our air, water, safety, and property. Our aquifer will be in constant jeopardy from their activities.

If they are so "community-minded", why do they have closed meetings with Judge Montgomery and the county commissioners? Why not publicly state the potential dangers that they will impose on our county? I am not anti-business. But please let us court companies and businesses that will not have the potential to destroy our environment like Vulcan Materials.

329/CR 252

78861 Wayne Stansbury
426-2892 Hondo

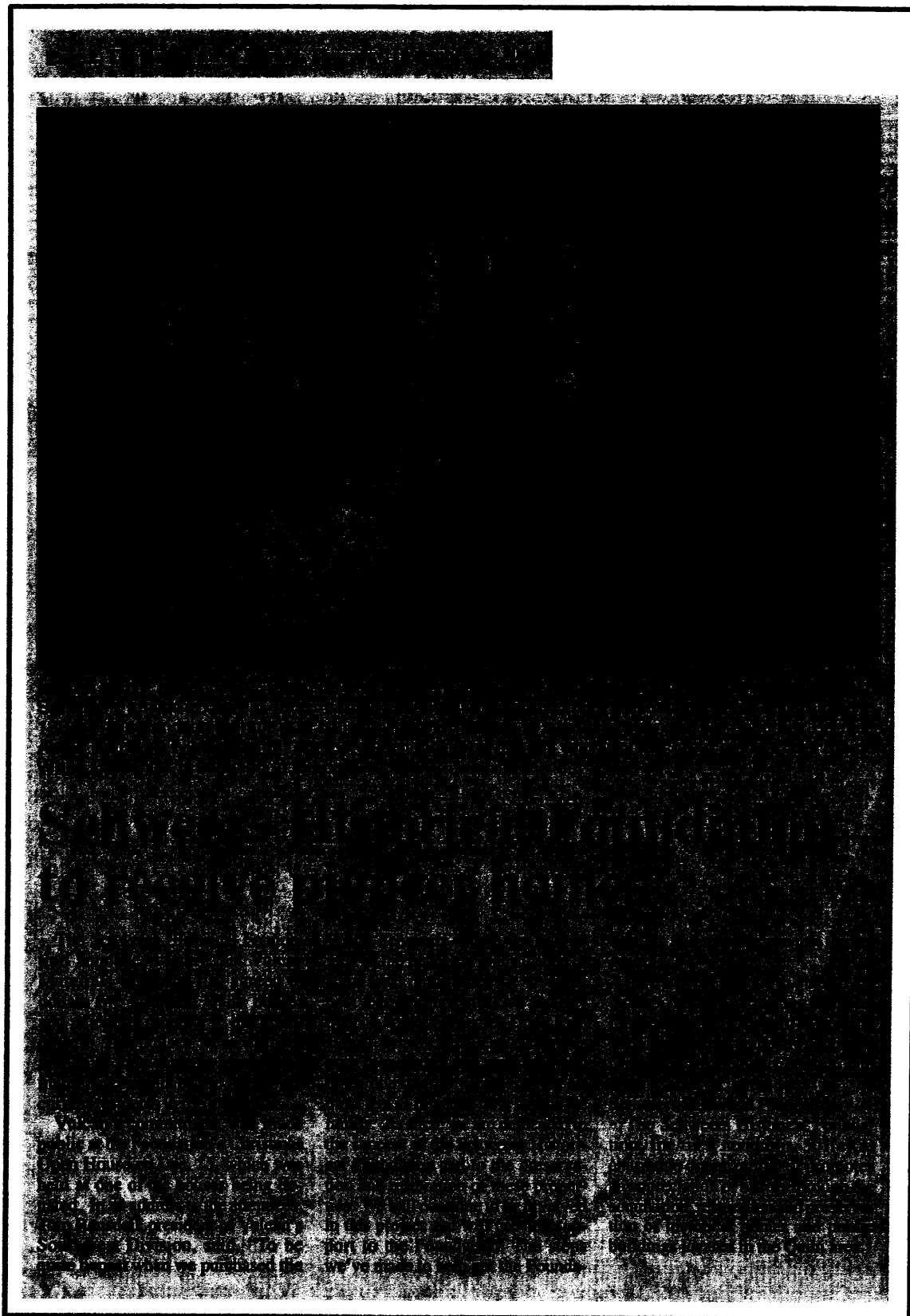
This address is north of the
Quarry Site

Ref. 5

Hondo
Anvil
Herald

Article

12/26/02



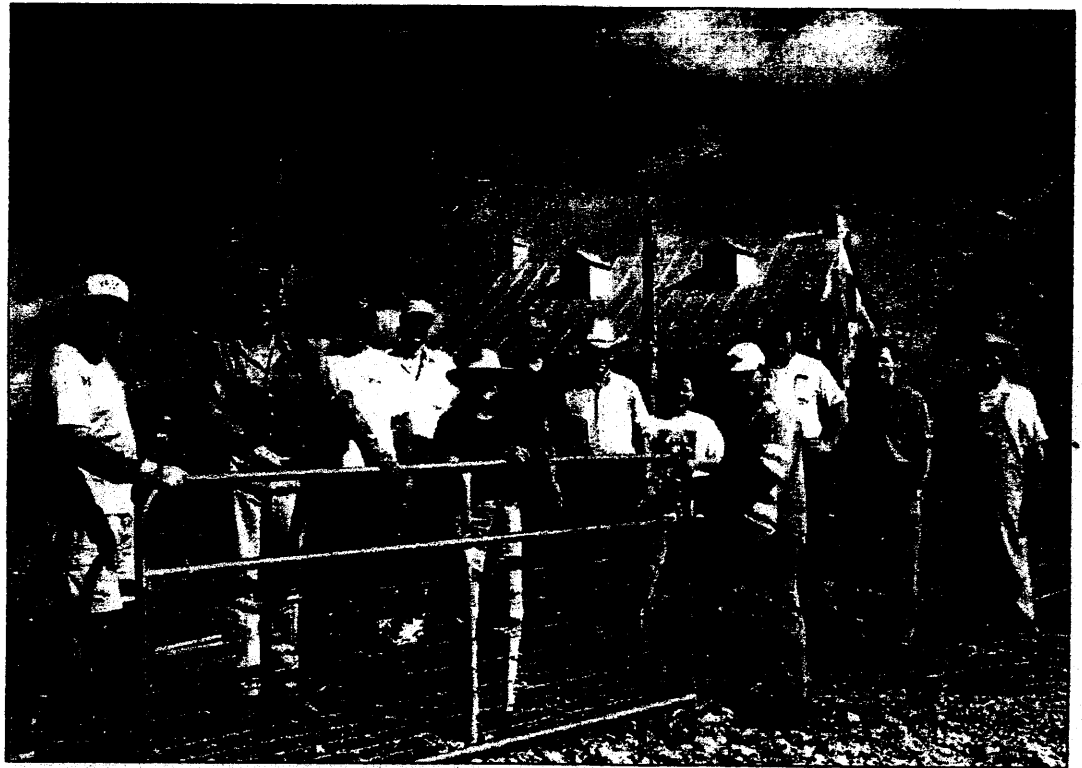
Ref. 6

The Hondo Anvil Herald, Thursday, December 12, 2002.

Hondo
Anvil
Herald

Article

12/12/02



The photo shows the 'Schweers Bunch' hard at work building a barbed wire fence with Aggie Douglas Riff as "Chief Honcho." He is a great-grandson of Heinrich and Johanna. His grandfather, Henry, was born here, along with his 13 siblings. Pictured (l-r) are Steve Riff, Douglas Riff, David Schoch, Eric Schoch, Carol Carpenter, Glenn Schweers, John Carpenter, Karen Riff, John Riff, Robert Riff, Scott Carpenter, and Ray Schoch.

Schweers family members plan open house at pioneer home

The community is invited to an old fashioned Christmas Open House to be held at the Wilhelm and Elizabeth Schweers pioneer home in Quihi, on Sunday, Dec. 15, from 3 to 6 p.m. Descendants of Schweer and Zeda Balzen will be celebrating their good fortune for the opportunity to acquire the pioneer home of Heinrich and Johanna Schweers shown above, the Wilhelm and Elizabeth's home, and an area around the family cemetery for parking.

Vulcan Material Company representatives will attend, and are expected to make an important announcement concerning the properties.

On May 8, 2001, Douglas Riff, Glenn Schweers, Tom Pichot and Don Schoch, all Schweers descendants,

met with the Vulcan folks for lunch in Castroville. They asked for consideration of allowing the Schweers families to acquire the two historic homes for restoration and preservation. The Schweers group was delighted to discover Vulcan was not only agreeable to the idea, but was genuinely interested in being part of such an endeavor.

"It was obvious this fine company is very community and people oriented, and that they sincerely wanted to help the family members realize their dream!" said Don Schoch, president of the newly-formed Schweers Historical Foundation, Inc.

Subsequently, Vulcan has allowed the family to remove items of pos-

sible historic value for safekeeping. They have cleared the Heinrich homesite of weeds, thick brush, and tree overgrowth and have provided legal assistance in becoming a legal entity. "We are now the Schweers Historical Foundation, Inc. (SHF), and can legally transact business and own properties. We have filed for, and received, a 501(C)(3) status from the IRS which is a non-profit, charitable organization, and can accept tax-deductible donations, memorial gifts, grants, etc., and enjoy tax exemption on any income, purchases of materials, contracts, etc." said Schoch.

"Everyone is invited to come see these precious homes, and appreciate the history!" he said.

03/01/01 11:37 FAX 1 830 538 3515

T T & G. P.C.

002

rs' number one concern. *Your turn*

number of lawsuits against teachers has been rising.

One of the main
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(TSTA) receive a \$6
insurance policy.
f principals surveyed
or ended school pro-
concern for lawsuits.
river's education and
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amaging is the impact discipline in the classroom and behavior problems in the classroom for administrators is to instill standards in the classroom due lawsuits.

a 15-year-old Ohio school district and 11 she received failing instant tardiness and then the district's 12- ed. She is seeking \$6 pensatory damages

because these grades hurt her chances for receiving scholarships, being admitted into college and getting a good job later in life.

Money is always an issue, and if legislators want to help teachers, they should move to free tax dollars now being spent in litigation and lining the pockets of trial lawyers. That money could better be spent in the classrooms and for teacher salaries or benefits.

Passing legislation to protect teachers from civil and criminal liability and punishing those who knowingly file false claims will reawaken our emphasis on education, not litigation. It will return the classroom to the teachers, the schoolyards to our children, and our tax dollars to education, not litigation.

Texas Citizens for a Sound Economy is a 48,000-member organization of consumers that support common-sense approaches to solving public policy problems. Texas CSE is a state affiliate of the 280,000-member national *Citizens for a Sound Economy*.

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loans.

Problem: Incumbents elected officials enjoy the unfair advantage of franked (free) mass mailings, even during election years, up to 60 days before the election.

My solution: End the mass-mail franking privilege for Senators during elections years.

My bill incorporates common sense into our campaign finance laws by targeting areas that have been subject to abuse and excess, while respecting freedom of expression. These are clear, workable reforms, designed to encourage broad political participation while addressing shortcomings that undermine public confidence. They would go a long way toward returning control of federal campaigns and elections to individual voters.

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state funds. Medicaid and CHIP costs and maintaining insurance benefits for retired state employees and public school retirees will require approximately \$1 billion in additional state funds.

State employees are leaving state jobs for higher paying jobs in the private sector, and they, too, are requesting a pay raise.

All of these requests have merit, but they also have a big price tag, which is why I cannot commit to supporting programs until the Senate Finance Committee completes its work on the state budget. As Cuthbert Goodline's character-

Dear Editor:

There is strength in numbers.

In his Feb. 22 letter, Mr. David Zelinski is far too generous in giving me all the credit for the landowners in the Quilhi/New Pounaina area in taking a stand against the railroad. Actually, if it were not for the work and assistance of many landowners, the agreement to prohibit the railroad could not have been accomplished. So let's give credit where credit is due. As area landowners, we recognize that we must plan together the destiny of our area. Over 750 people have signed the petition against the proposed railroad and quarry. People binding together in a covenant gives them a stronger voice, and also legal standing.

In December, Vulcan began to acquire property under the cover of an assumed name of ModTex Land Co., instead of Vulcan Lands, Inc., presumably for the proposed quarry's railroad right-of-way. Members of the Medina County Environmental Action Association saw the immediate need to do something to protect their property. An executive council meeting was called which gave advice and consent to seek legal aid. A covenant, whose sole restriction was the placement of any type of railroad or conveyor system was created, thereby blocking a direct north/south route from Dunlay to the proposed quarry site. It was subsequently signed by 16 landowners. Some of their ancestors made their living from the same land and were the original settlers.

The landowners and residents of this area realize that Vulcan's rosy promises about the county and its citizens are just that: rosy promises. By the way, I doubt that Vulcan will hire 100 dozen (1200) people, as Mr. Zefinski has stated. Vulcan does not want us to think about the downside. No one else has shown that the ultimate bottom line for our county would be a benefit, and have not shown that this would not cost all of us more than we would gain, with the roads constantly being torn up by the trucks, for instance.

And what about the drain on our already scarce water and electricity resources? These costs are already increasing. This would certainly further increase the cost of the water and electricity for all of the rest of us.

This 2200 acre mega-quarry would be a project that will last at least 30 years. There are not many in the entire United States that are this size. This project would permanently change the direction of the progress of this county. Mr. Zellinski states that I am against growth and economic development in Medina County, but there are other enterprises and industries that would impact our growth in a positive manner, both financially and environmentally, that I welcome, such as Avory Industries.

Landowners must plan area's destiny

For several years this area has been fortunate in attracting many newcomers who have moved here and made their homes. The local churches have experienced growth and are expanding their facilities in anticipation of further growth. This steady and positive growth will dwindle in the face of many of the problems created by the traffic of the railroad, gravel trucks, air and water pollution, etc. If a quarry is such a great thing, why are the neighboring residents of quarries that are in operation in San Antonio trying to get rid of them, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in legal fees, and are constantly battling their encroachment on adjacent properties?

This is an area which floods frequently, some times more severely than others. Our properties will be permanently affected by the alteration of the flood patterns caused by the earthen berms of the proposed railroad. Another concern is the preservation of the unique historical buildings and cottages of this area, which date back to the earliest beginnings of the colonies founded by Henri Castro. These will surely be damaged or lost due to this increased flooding.

The covenant is a very simple agreement. There is only one restriction: no railroad. (It does not restrict methane gas from cows, or farm equipment on the roadways.) All who sign it are freely and voluntarily agreeing to this one single restriction. Just why Mr. Zelinski is opposed to a covenant whose only restriction is prohibiting a railroad, when he seems that he doesn't want a railroad on his property, is a mystery to me. Perhaps his real estate business is a factor.

The commissioner's court has given MCEAA written assurance that there will be no condemnation of land for private enterprise, and Vulcan is private enterprise. This assurance, plus the covenant, will allow us to continue to use our land without interference of our property rights. Yes, the proposed quarry site property owners have a right to give Vulcan leases to dig up their land. But Vulcan does not have a right to cross our property without our permission.

Yes, the people of Quibi should be careful of what they sign, particularly if it is to grant a railroad right-of-way. People should think of their friends, neighbors, their homes, their health, the ultimate good of the country, and talk to a good attorney.

We will continue our efforts to prevent a railroad being built to the proposed quarry site by enlisting others to join us in additional covenants. If you want to protect your property from this monoco, please contact us. We want to send as strong a message as possible. Don't mess with Quihi.

Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald
President, Medina County
Environmental Action Association

Let Salinas know you care

Ref. 8

The Hondo Anvil Herald, Thursday, February 22, 2001, Section 2 Page 5

Hondo
Anvil
Letter
To the
Editor

2/22/01

Your turn

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861

Phn. (830) 426-3348

Quihi, be careful what you sign

Dear Editor,

As most of you are aware, there is a controversy in Quihi over the proposed Vulcan Quarry rail line. Residents are being asked to sign a covenant putting restrictions on the use of their properties. Although the covenants pertain to restricting a wish to "establish a uniform plan for the protection of the use, enjoyment, development and improvement of the restricted properties." This document was drawn up by or for Robert Fitzgerald, President of the Medina County Environmental Action Association. I don't know about some of the other residents in the area, but I don't want Mr. Fitzgerald to plan the use of my property or my neighbors.

It is time that Mr. Fitzgerald finally lets us all know why he is

against growth and economic development in Medina County. If he doesn't think 100 or so dozen jobs is important, maybe he should talk to people that don't have one, or are working for minimum wage with no benefits. I don't know that I want a railroad going through my backyard, but look at all the people in La Coste, Hondo and Devine who live with 20 plus trains a day.

If Mr. Fitzgerald doesn't want a railroad on his property, all he has to do is say no, but I believe the other residents should be very careful about what they sign. Maybe the next thing he'll object to is methane gas from cows or farm equipment on the roadways

David Zelinski
Quihi

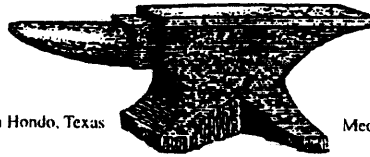
Ref. 9

Hondo Anvil Article
2/08/01

HONDO ANVIL HERALD

Volume 115, Number 6
Thursday, February 8, 2001

Published in Hondo, Texas



Two Sections, 28 Pages
50 Cents

Medina County's Leading Newspaper

Quihi quarry query

Residents still fighting; Vulcan still studying

By William Hoover
ANVIL HERALD CORRESPONDENT

Medina County Environmental Action Association president Robert Fitzgerald has been fighting bureaucracies that enable the construction of large rock quarries which, he fears, will permanently alter natural land use patterns.

Fitzgerald has led a fight to prevent Vulcan Industries from building a huge quarry near Quihi, citing health and environmental concerns.

Vulcan President Tom Ransdell promises the quarry will have a minimal negative impact on health and the environment and says the new business will be an economic stimulator for the county.

"We have been busy and I have had the flu, but we are working on the assumption they are (proceeding with plans to build a quarry in Medina county)," said Fitzgerald. "So much has changed since last week, anything I said now would need to be retracted. There is a lot in the works right now. TNRC is supposed to

notify me if Vulcan is issued a permit but they could change names."

Fitzgerald promised he would notify the paper as soon as he had definitive news on the quarry's status.

Ransdell, however, said there has been little change in status over the last six or seven months and his company is proceeding with feasibility studies. Vulcan continues to study the economic and environmental impacts of the quarry and railroad right-of-way, according to Ransdell.

"We continue to work diligently to evaluate the project from the public side, the environmental side, and the economic side," Ransdell said. "We have ongoing work with market researchers to find a market for this product (crushed stone). We don't build quarries hoping people will come. We need a viable market before we decide to go ahead. We have a sophisticated process and database we use to evaluate a green-field quarry—a location where there has never been a quarry."

"On the environmental side, we had a number of experts who have

been working over a year, nearly 18 months, performing environmental assessments for the quarry and surrounding area and the railroad right-of-way area. Assessment continues with no completion date, but information is coming in."

"We have not done much to bother the public until we know where the quarry project will end up. By bothering I mean we have not been holding public meetings with local organizations to explain our plans since there has been no change in what we originally told people. When we know our course of action, we will let the public know. We have been proactive through the entire process."

"We have also contacted landowners in the area about the potential of their land being used as a railroad right-of-way. This project is dependent on connecting the quarry site to the Union Pacific railroad. If we are successful, we will have eight miles of railroad track to build. That will require right-of-way, permission, and agreement of the landowners. That is where we are," explained Ransdell.



Ram Tough

Three members of the Hondo Owl football team, all offensive linemen and all with three years varsity experience, signed to play football for the Angelo State Rams Wednesday. Seated from left, are HHS seniors Michael Wiemers, Nathan Fillingar and Michael Muennink. Pictured in back are Hondo High School Football Coach and Athletic Director Jack Rushing, Delwin Wiemers, Gary Fillingar, Linda Fillingar, Debbie Muennink, HHS Principal Larry Carroll and Assistant Principal Clay Rosenbaum. Wednesday was national signing day in college football.

PHOTO BY JEFF BERGER

Ref. 10

Medina Valley
Times
Article

1/18/01

THE TIMES

BUY DINERO
CLEAN IT UP
RESCUE

Medina Valley Times
1/18/01
Page 1

Ref. 11

Medina Valley
Times
Article

9/21/00

Castroville
News Bulletin

9/14/00

Ref. 12

CASTROVILLE NEWS BULLETIN — SEPTEMBER 14, 2000 • See "hospital", page 2
Quarry still hasn't filed for state permit

Adelina Gonzales
STAFF WRITER

Vulcan Materials Co. is still considering opening a limestone quarry in the Quihi area below Medina Lake. However, they have not applied for any permits through the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Committee as yet.

TNRCC spokesperson Pat Shaughnessy said there weren't any permit applications on file from Vulcan

Materials Co. regarding a limestone quarry anywhere in the Medina County area.

Vulcan Materials president Tom Ransdell confirmed that they have not elected to file for any permits at this point.

"We have not filed anything with TNRCC, and will not until we think that we have a viable project, and then we'll go through the appropriate channels," he said.

Sentiment among some

local residents remains strong against Vulcan's proposal.

Medina County Environmental Action Association Chairman Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald says he will continue his relentless efforts to dissuade the company from opening the quarry. "We're certainly going to continue to battle it every step of the way," he said.

Vulcan is not abandoning the quarry project, but moving

ahead cautiously, Ransdell said. They plan to come to some conclusions before the end of the year.

Preliminary and tentative plans publicized earlier contemplated a possible railroad spur northerly to the quarry site from a projected freight terminal accessing the United Pacific line at Dunlay and not far from a cement mixing plant opened within the past year.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2000
MEDINA COUNTY,
TEXAS

MEDINA VALLEY
THE TIMES

No quarry permits filed yet

Adelina Gonzales
STAFF WRITER

Quarry- Vulcan Materials Co. is still looking into the possibility of opening a limestone quarry in the Quihi area below Medina Lake. However, they have not applied for any permits through the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Committee as yet.

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Hondo
Anvil
Herald

6/01/00

Ref. 13

Matters

HONDO ANVIL HERALD
06/01/2000

MCEAA holds membership meeting, adopts by-laws

Submitted by
Dr. Robert and Alayne Fitzgerald

The Medina County Environmental Action's fourth meeting was held Thursday, May 25, at 6 p.m. at the Medina County Fairgrounds Hall. One hundred seventeen members and their invited guests attended the membership meeting and barbecue. Landowners for the possible proposed railway between Dunlay and the quarry site in central Medina County were invited guests of the MCEAA. Committee reports were given, reporting that membership is steadily growing. During the membership meeting a board of directors was elected. Elected were Dennis Skalka, Judy Dittmar, and Brad Regnier. By-laws for the MCEAA were also adopted.

Following a catered barbecue, Gene Lanfear, a well-known attorney with expertise in legal cases concerning easements and condemnation, spoke to the gathering. He pointed out that condemnation of the land would not occur because this is a private enterprise, as also acknowledged by the Commissioners' Court and Judge David Montgomery.

Those in attendance received valuable information concerning what it means to have a railroad going through their property. Guests were informed that although they would still be paying taxes on the land used for the right-of-way, they would no longer have the use or control of the land.

Mr. Lanfear reminded those in attendance that this project would come at the cost of the people in Medina County in spite of Vulcan's propaganda that it would profit everyone in Medina County.

He stated that land easements for a railroad right-of-way would cause indefinite changes. Unlike rights-of-

way for pipelines, electrical lines, or telephone lines, the rights-of-way for railroads are very intrusive. For example: noise, waiting for trains to cross, and loaded cars parked on side tracks awaiting shipment all the while having their uncovered contents blowing on homes and property. All use and control of the right-of-way area is lost to the landowner, including spraying for weed control. Guests were informed of what they should demand in a contract with Vulcan for a right-of-way, including but not limited to the following:

- The contract should contain a provision that the payment received for the railroad easement be equal to the highest amount received by another landowner.

- Royalties on each ton of material mined, assessed at the mine on gross amount before transportation costs are taken out, should be paid to the easement grantors.

- Since tracts of land would be divided, contracts should contain provisions to be paid by Vulcan for fencing, cattle guards, watering facilities, and changes in irrigation of farm land altered by the railroad right of way.

- Since no more than 50% of water pumping rights is transferable to another tract, this should be given consideration also to avoid losing some of the water pumping rights. The contract should contain provisions for accessible crossing points to the other side that fit the landowner's needs.

- Since the railroad berms would impound water during heavy rainfall, landowners should have their contract contain provisions for culverts and bridges as necessary to normalize runoff and to avoid liability to their neighbors.

- Landowners should obtain protection for cleanup costs of toxic material in the event of an accident leav-

ing such material on their property.

- Provisions for removing the railroad tracks including berms and bridges, etc., so when the quarry ceases production or the railroad is no longer used, this expense would not be borne by the easement grantor.

- Costs for returning the land to its original condition should also be borne by Vulcan.

Landowners were reminded that land divided by a railway is not worth what it was before the division, and landowners should be compensated accordingly on the entire property. Mr. Lanfear urged anyone entering a contract for easement to seek counsel from their own attorneys for their own protection.

He continued by stating that, although the quarry has been advertised to be in production for 'only' 50 years, the past history of similar projects and their 'track record' indicates that they would cease only when they run out of material or they were forced to cease their operation. Mr. Lanfear stated that, once in operation, other projects—such as a cement plant or a concrete plant for making trusses for bridges—would in all likelihood follow, thus ensuring Vulcan's stranglehold on Medina County indefinitely.

The attendees were once again informed that what landowners do now would affect the future of Medina County indefinitely, and that the gains proposed by Vulcan would be offset by permanent sacrifices by the people of Medina County. The land will never be the same in spite of all the things Vulcan says it would do for Medina County.

A question and answer session followed, with individuals receiving answers to their special concerns. Attendees reported that it was a very informative meeting.

Hondo
Anvil
Herald

Letter to
Editor

5/4/00

Quarry's traffic would be too much to bear

Dear Editor:

According to Vulcan Materials, if this proposed Quihi quarry and railroad spur become a reality, for the next 50 years, there would be 200 million tons of limestone extracted from the quarry, with 10 to 20% of the limestone being hauled out by 18-wheel trucks.

If 15% of the material is hauled by trucks, did you know that:

- There would be 524 trucks going down CR 353 and CR 351 and then onto FM 2676 to either Rio Medina at Highway 471, or to Highway 173 every week?

- There would be 87 trucks a day?

- There would be between nine and 11 trucks every hour?

And double those totals for return trips to the quarry.

Then there is the fact that 150 employees would go to the quarry to work every day.

And then they would leave the quarry to go home in the evening. Plus the fact that there would be trucks delivering fuel and supplies to the quarry. For the next 50 years.

We have many homes in this area,

with working parents, school children and senior citizens. All who drive FM 2676 will be sandwiched between 78,000-lb. trucks, with rocks breaking windshields and other driving hazards. Besides the danger of all this traffic to our cars and school buses, who can even guess how much money it would take to keep the roads in good repair? When asked why there were no asphalt roads or parking lots in the Helotes quarry, even though much asphalt is manufactured there, Mr. Ransdell replied, "It is too expensive and our trucks beat it up too bad."

The rest of the limestone that would be quarried (80 to 90%) would be hauled out by the proposed railroad spur from the quarry to the existing railroad at Dunlay. This presents another set of hazards which we in Medina County need to explore.

The buzzwords "growth," "progress," "good citizen," "good steward of the land," and "good neighbor" are meaningless when one is faced with the prospect of this nightmare becoming a reality.

Alyne Fitzgerald
Quihi



Castroville News Bulletin

5/4/00

Volume 42
Eighteenth Issue

CASTROVILLE NEWS BULLETIN

City Council - May 9
School Board - May 17
CASTROVILLE NEWS BULLETIN
5/4/00 75¢

Chamber of Commerce applause greets quarry proposal

Thomas Carlucci
Staff Writer

Vulcan Materials Southwest Division President Tom Ransdell received an unexpected round of applause following one key question from a citizen at the Castroville Area Chamber of Commerce luncheon at Sammy's Restaurant Tuesday.

"How can we, the city and the Chamber of Commerce be of help in opening the quarry?" asked a man in the back of the room.

Ransdell explained the company must apply to the Texas National Resource Conservation Commission for a permit. The TNRCC will then conduct a hearing.

"That's when we will need your help," said Ransdell.

Ransdell presented Vulcan's proposed limestone quarry and railroad spur project to the chamber members, but said the project is still in the evaluation stage.

"We want to be a good neighbor, and we have a good track record," said Ransdell. Ransdell pointed out industry Week magazine's claim that "Vulcan" is one of the best

managed industrial companies in the world."

"We are the largest aggregate producers in the United States," said Ransdell. "My purpose is not to impress you with that," he said, "because biggest is not always the best." Instead, Ransdell used a slide presentation to promote Vulcan's plan to locate in Medina County.

The quarry, should Vulcan decide to build in the county, will be a three-pronged operation: 1 - the quarry; 2 - crushing and screening; and 3 - rail transportation. Vulcan's primary product will be crushed limestone.

The product is further divided into three categories: 1 - a base material; 2 - clean, washed aggregate that will be shipped to remote markets, and 3 - a

small amount of aggregate used for local consumption.

Houston is the largest aggregate market in the United States, Ransdell said.

Ransdell also addressed the concerns of citizens about what impact the company will have on the environment.

"The creeks will not be dammed, no damage will occur to the aquifer, the dust will not increase, water will not be wasted, property values will not be decreased and Vulcan

will not place demands on the city's budget," said Ransdell. In fact, Vulcan recycles 80 to 85 percent of the water they use, and the company will not make concrete, according to Ransdell.

Ransdell conceded some drilling and blasting will have to be done, but the TNRCC requires Vulcan to control the dust.

Transportation of the product will be mostly by rail.

Ransdell said the company expects to invest \$30 million to open the quarry and produce 150 new jobs with an estimated \$4 million payroll. Additionally, expectations are the company will spend locally nearly \$600,000 annually in fuel and \$1.8 million in electricity.

"We expect to pay about \$130,000 for Medina County taxes and around \$450,000 in school taxes, paid to the Hondo Independent School District," said Ransdell.

Summarizing, Ransdell told the group the company expects a \$7.5 million annual combined input into the community, and the railroad used to transport the material is a key element of the project.

Medina County Environmental Action Association Chairman Robert Fitzgerald stood up to oppose the quarry.

"We have some very serious considerations about the quarry," he said. Fitzgerald said the railroad would be very close to Quihi and his organization has 800 signatures opposing the opening of the quarry.

"This is a financial enterprise that would benefit Medina County, but you have to consider what would be sacrificed," he said. "People will not move here from San Antonio to be near a railroad."

Fitzgerald told the group the same revenues could be realized by 200 new homes in the area. This comment drew a heated response.

"When a family moves in an \$80,000 house and brings three kids along, the demand on the school system is more than what they pay in taxes," said farmer, fireman and small business owner Ray Jagge.

"How about a \$200,000 house?" asked Fitzgerald.

"An entity like this," replied Jagge, "that makes no demands on the infrastructure is a far better investment than 200 houses, sir. Anyone with any business sense would know that."

"We'll be glad to compare our business figures with you on that," said Fitzgerald.

"Medina County has very few and limited natural resources," said Jagge. "We need to attract businesses like this to develop the last natural resource we have in this county, which is limestone. If we run a company like this one away, my taxes will go up and your taxes will go up," Jagge told Fitzgerald having a company like Vulcan in the county that pays a large amount in taxes with little drain on the county will benefit all the county's taxpayers.



Tom Ransdell

“Anyone with any business sense would know that.”
Ray Jagge

”

Ref. 16

CASTROVILLE NEWS BULLETIN Thursday, April 21, 2000
SAME LETTER IN HONDO DAILY HERALD 4/21/00

Letters to the Editor

Appreciates coverage of event

Editor:

On behalf of the Castro Colonias Heritage Association, the Alsatian Dancers of Texas, and the community I want to thank you and your staff for the excellent coverage in your newspaper of the 29th Anniversary reunion of the Alsatian Dancers of Texas on April 9th at Medina Valley HS Cafeteria.

We were honored to have Roland Bentz and his family from Berghaim, Alsace, France as special guests for this celebration.

The event drew over 100 people and was truly a cultural celebration for the many dancers and the Burges family who organized and have nurtured the group for the past twenty years.

Our Sincere Thanks,
Carmie Balmor
President

Museum article was misleading

I read with great interest the article written by Tom Carucci about the proposed museum sites and I have but one question - which meeting the proposed sites was discussed at? He certainly was not at the same meeting I attended. If he had been, city officials as a whole and Linda Hancock specifically would not have been so grossly misquoted.

Hancock, representing proposed two sites to Council: the first being 1 and to the side of the old house and the second the old hospital. I would not presume to speak on behalf of the entire Council let me state my opinion on the proposed sites. The area behind and left of the Alsatian is not a viable site. My feeling is as follows: first, the park and ride is not enough to accommodate

the additional parking that would be necessary for the museum would destroy the appearance of the area and detract from its natural beauty. Second, building the museum so close to the Alsatian house would make the area look cramped and cluttered, also impacting the appearance of the area in general. Third, although Mr. Hancock presented a solution to the drainage for the area I feel the solution creates a safety issue. The drainage plan that was presented showed using a curb to divert the water around the area and into a large pipe which would drop it directly into the river. The volume of water that could be produced in a heavy rain would, in effect, turn the system into a water slide. This area is adjacent to a residential neighborhood and popular restaurant, if a child or anyone else were to lose their footing at such a time and fall into the system the result would very likely be fatal. And finally, the intersection at the Alsatian house is already a very high traffic area where several accidents have occurred. Deliberately increasing the traffic here would lead to even more problems.

Incidentally, the traffic in this area is what Linda Guerra objected to, not the area of the old hospital.

To me placing the museum in the old hospital has several benefits. First, it would aid in the restoration and upkeep of an already historical building. Second, the square has plenty of parking available, and finally it would be located in an area surrounded by the history it represents.

In closing, let me say that I as well as the majority of the Council, I feel, wants the CCHA to be successful in preserving and displaying our heritage. No Council member voiced any concerns about having the museum at the old hospital. As all Council meetings are taped, I would suggest Mr. Carucci listen to the tape so he can correct the impression

he gave to the public.

Respectfully,
Karen D. Gilliam-Fifield
Councilwoman, District 2

Follow the money on quarry issue

Editor:

If you have read the local newspapers in recent weeks, one would conclude the effects of a quarry in northern Medina County are minimal and should be desired by all. I say let's "Follow The Money." We see opponents that voice their support for the project, but find that some of their income comes from providing services or support to quarries. One of our neighbors at Medina Lake concluded that after careful thought and study they were reversing their position on the quarry. This came as a surprise as only a few weeks before they were vocal about the dust and contamination. Additionally, they regarded members of the Medina County Environmental Action Association as followers of the Pled Piper.

Recently an area paper printed an article praising the quality of life while living next to a quarry in San Antonio. If you "Follow The Money," the individual interviewed was related to one of the families that stands a lot to gain by the sale of their land for quarry use.

I think we all should become familiar with the "Pled Piper" fable. To begin with, he was hired for a fee for a pest control service and he was totally successful in ridding the area of rats. It was only when the townspeople reneged on the agreement did he exact his due. God gave this earth to man to exercise good stewardship over its resources. To lay waste to 2000 acres of land, which can never be used again constitutes a reneging by the stewards of that land and the degradation of the lives of our descendants.

Dennis & Maggie Skalka

so little reason for, no one except control. But a clear lidings is not usu- andowner to man- enough so that a reasonable mea- landowner and ice in a case such rucks were forced ice to the proper- up in flames. story. If fire and ough of the right able to do a safer, ig lives and prop- be used for those tingly control over the departments at choice is there ate or poorly run-

send a few buicks EMS. If you think much from those nd they certainly gh like a bunch of

it we can make ius should.

Ref. 17

Medina Co. Republican Club to meet

There will be a meeting of the Republican Club in Hondo at Hondo's Steak House, Hondo, on Tuesday, April 25, starting at 7:30 p.m.

Tom Ranadell, president of Vulcan Southwest Division, will present his plans for building, running and maintaining the proposed limestone quarry and associated railroad spur planned for upper central Medina County. This will be the other side of the controversy presented by Dr. Robert Fitzgerald last month.

If an attendee wants to eat, it is recommended that he/she should come about 6 p.m. so that he/she will be finished before the meeting starts. The Republican Club does not plan to serve refreshments.

Seminar scheduled

For people just starting a business, the IRS announces a free small business seminar in San Antonio. It is cosponsored by the Small Business Development Center.

The Business Income Tax Seminar runs Thursday, May 25, from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., at UTSA Downtown, 1222 North Main, room 250. Topics will include: record keeping, self-employment taxes, selecting a business structure, and IRS procedures.

Reservations are encouraged since seating is limited. Please call the Small Business Development Center at (210) 458-2460. Reasonable arrangements for persons with disabilities will be made if requested in advance.

For more information, call the IRS Volunteer & Education Programs Office at (512) 499-5439.

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Castroville News Bulletin Article

4/20/00

Castroville News Bulletin

Letters to the Editor

Ref. 18

3/23/00

EDITOR'S NOTE: Some letters have been edited for length and to avoid repetition of statements.

Quarry will benefit area in many ways

Editor:

We are writing to you in regard to the proposed Medina County Quarry. As lifetime residents and involved members of the county we support this project, not just for our benefit, but for the benefit of the citizens of this community.

When Vulcan Materials approached us about the quarry, we took time to learn about the company and the relationship they have with other communities where their quarries are located. We were pleased to discover the emphasis Vulcan put on being a good community citizen. In fact, just last month, Tom Ransdell, president of Vulcan's Southwest Division, received the Uvalde Area Development Foundation's award at their annual Chamber of Commerce banquet.

As a neighbor to the ninth largest land use of the fastest growing cities in the U.S., growth for us is inevitable. Yet Medina County continues to resist corporate growth and instead has experienced tremendous residential growth. The quarry would bring jobs to the county, so fewer of our residents would have to make long commutes to San Antonio or other distant locations.

Let's welcome companies that can bring economic prosperity and help improve the quality of life in our county.

Every landowner and resident in the county benefits when a corporation like Vulcan comes in and converts agricultural exempt land to commercial land. For example, we pay \$1,200 annually in taxes on the 1800 acres Vulcan plans to convert to the quarry site. Vulcan, which incidentally does not plan to ask for a tax abatement, will eventually pay \$600,000 annually in taxes.

We are pleased that approximately \$450,000 of those tax dollars would go to the Hondo Independent School District, reducing the need for costly

school bonds. The other \$150,000 would go the county, again helping minimize tax increases for citizens. Approximately \$7 million will be pumped into the local economy to pay for salaries, supplies, services and other operating expenses.

We recommend you visit the Vulcan quarries in Helotes and San Antonio's Hill Country Road. The Helotes Quarry is adjacent to O'Connor High School, one of San Antonio's newest high schools, and the Humber Road Quarry is south of Clark High School, surrounded by some of the most expensive homes in the city. These people bought their \$200,000 to \$1 million-plus homes knowing the quarry was their neighbor.

Our grandson who attends Clark was not aware the quarry backed up to the athletic fields that he practices on daily. None of the students were males or were worried to drink bottled water. In fact, he has never seen dust, flying rocks or heard dynamite blasts.

Danger is apparently not a concern for those homeowners or for the Northside Independent School District, which has two of their largest schools next to quarries.

We have friends and relatives in the Cliff area near Medina Lake who also live within a mile of a rock quarry and they tell us the quarry has never been a problem for them.

The quarry rock will be moved by trucks limited to a speed of 20 mph in the area. This will avoid causing harm to wildlife and livestock. Their mating habits and reproduction cycles will not be affected, and crop growth will be unimpeded. The slow speed will significantly lower the noise level and add in pedestrian safety. Vulcan also plans to run the railroad either over or under the ground at major roadways in the county to reduce traffic hazards.

The availability of commercial transportation makes the agricultural land in the county more marketable thus increasing its value.

Surrounding towns like Hondo, La Coma, Devine, Natalia, Lytle and neighborhoods in San Antonio such as The Dominion and Stravano Estates have rail-

roads running through them. Many claim we are acting out of greed, but this is not true. We would never harm the community that we love, where we have raised our children, and that has been a part of our families for generations.

We ask each of you to take the opportunity to learn more about Vulcan, the communities where their quarries are located, and the benefits that have been afforded to the residents in those communities.

Sincerely,

Jean and Clovis Boehme
Lifetime residents of Medina County

Benefits don't outweigh hazards

Editor:

As a property owner in Medina Oaks I am writing to oppose the limestone quarry in Medina County proposed by Vulcan Materials Company. The impact this quarry will have on our air, aquifer, roads, property values, and country tranquility is beyond reason. Our major concerns are:

- The rock crushing operation produces a fine dust that is easily carried to homes and communities far from the quarry site that is a nuisance and could produce and aggravate existing medical conditions.

- The quarry is located in a recharge area for the Edwards Aquifer. Because of the blasting and depth of the quarry, a real possibility of aquifer contamination exists if a spill of hazardous materials occurs.

- Blasting may produce damage to existing foundations and structures. One of these structures is the Medina Lake Dam, that is already suffering deterioration.

- This type of blasting can affect fault lines and underground water flow, placing the wells of surrounding farms, homes, and communities in jeopardy.

- The increase in large, and possibly poorly maintained trucks, on a limited number of county roads, puts everyone at risk, especially the children who occupy the many school buses that travel this area.

- Railroad tracks would need to be brought to the quarry site to remove the majority of the crushed rock. These tracks will split farms and ranches that have been in existence for over 100 years, making it hard to be efficient.

- The additional danger and noise of the constant movement of materials on these tracks produces hazards this community should not have. We know the noise that occurs when the neighbor's dog is barking. The Vulcan rock crushers will be heard for many miles in all directions from the quarry.

- The small contribution to the tax rolls by Vulcan is nothing compared to the loss of property values.

There is no guarantee that the 125 jobs that are to be created will come from Medina County residents - More likely Bexar County will benefit from the jobs and that is where the money from those jobs will be spent.

Sincerely,

Alfred M. Bishop
Jerlene R. Bishop
Capparis Cove, TX

Quarry will lower property values

Editor:

Our family is writing this letter to let you know we oppose the limestone quarry in Medina County proposed by Vulcan Materials Company. This location has the danger of becoming the largest such operation in southern Texas. The impact this mega-quarry will have on our air, aquifer, roads, property values, and country tranquility is beyond reason.

The four of us bought this property less than six (6) months ago. We moved out here to get away from all the air pollution and noise in San Antonio on Dec. 31, 1999. Approximately one and one half months later we find out Vulcan wants to have their limestone quarry less than a mile from our homes. Our children/grandchildren currently suffer from respiratory problems. The dust this quarry will create will aggravate their respiratory problems further, more so than living in S.A. with the smog and

other air pollutants. It may even create more health problems for them as well as us.

We bought property out here because of it being God's country. It is so peaceful, clean and quiet. Now Vulcan wants to come with their blasting, heavy equipment, railroad and noise in all their glory stating they will be a contribution to the tax rolls and being 125 jobs to the area. There is no guarantee the jobs will be filled with Medina County residents. More likely Bexar County will benefit from the jobs and that is where the money from those jobs will be spent. At the very least the upper echelon (who make the most money) will be filled with persons that they bring with them, who do not live in our area. Some of the labor jobs may possibly be filled with people from Medina County.

Do you think the owners of Vulcan with their children and grandchildren would live next to a limestone rock crushing quarry with all the noise, dust and who knows what else? We do not think they would. No one would by choice; hence, our property value will go down.

Southwest Texas has numerous other areas where limestone may be mined with less impact on the environment or the residents. Without your support and active participation, Medina County will be damaged beyond our ability to correct.

Respectfully,

Donald E. Harp
Sharon K. Harp
Sean H. Fensley
Kimberly K. Fensley

Facts don't support fear tactics of quarry opposers

Editor:

Until recently I was a member of the opposition to the proposed Quilt quarry. My mind was changed when I decided to take it upon myself to further investigate the allegations and concerns by the opponents leadership.

I contacted a Vulcan representative to inquire about the dangers, the environmental hazards, and the effect the quarry would have on the local area. As a res-

ident living relatively close to the proposed quarry site, I am concerned about what's to come. I was told I would not experience any changes in my quiet lifestyle due to flying rocks, dust, toxic waste or flooding. I also learned that the quarry would have a huge positive economic effect to the county and to myself as a taxpayer.

I then furthered my investigation. I traveled to Helotes to visit the quarry. It is hardly noticeable and has a new, beautiful high school on its north side; the Helotes Little League on its south side; and households and businesses scattered throughout the area.

Thinking there must not be any danger here, I then proceeded to the Humber quarry where I noticed things again to be exactly as I was told by Vulcan. There are hundreds of nice homes surrounding the quarry. It also can hardly be noticed from the road because there is a big rock fence built along the property. There was a railroad running along the side of the quarry and through the middle of these expensive neighborhoods. Again I noticed no evidence of danger at this location but evidence of prosperity.

Upon my return, I contacted the leader of Medina County Environmental Action Association. I asked him if he would have the Vulcan people attend the next opposition meeting. I felt it was important for the citizens to hear both sides of the story. The answer he gave me was absolutely not. I informed him that he could take my husband and my name off the petition list because we didn't want to have any part of his organization.

I recommend to anyone concerned to do what I did and investigate on your own to find out the facts surrounding the proposed quarry.

We are not children following the Pied Piper. I would hate to see this county lose yet another opportunity for economic growth because citizens failed to find out for themselves the real facts.

Sincerely,

Jon and Elizabeth Welder
Medina Lake

Medina Valley Times

3/20/00

Ref. 19

PAGE 4 MARCH 20, 2000, MEDINA VALLEY TIMES

Peering into the quarry crater

Michael Stern
Staff Writer

They are immense, they are deep, and one is planned for the northern portion of Medina County.

The San Antonio area quarries operated by Vulcan Materials Co. Southwest Division are huge craters carved out of limestone deposits ringing the Alamo City. They literally are the concavities of the multi-million dollar aggregate business which is planning a new plant between Quilbi and Medina Lake.

A recent tour of the four San Antonio area quarries was a tutorial in one of the most basic of all industries: extracting limestone from the earth, processing it, and selling the finished product to customers.

"It is not a very sexy business," said Vulcan SW president Tom Ransdell who conducted the tour. "We take limestone out of the ground and get it to our customers. It's simple, but we make quite an investment in order to do it right."

Quilbi and Medina Lake area residents have raised objections to the proposed quarry in recent months. They have organized under the name of the Medina County Environmental Action Association headed by Dr. Robert Fitzgerald who serves as its chairman. The group's main objections include air pollution in the form of fine limestone dust, excessive noise from plant rock crushers and other equipment, vibrations from blasting, and an increase in traffic. The latter also includes concerns over construction of a railroad spur linking the quarry with Union Pacific tracks near Dunlay.

Ransdell explained the need for multiple quarries in the greater San Antonio area.

"Transporting crushed limestone to customers is very costly due to its weight. We have determined it is not cost-effective to sell our product in this area if it has to be trucked more than 30 miles,"

said Ransdell.

This formula does not apply, however, to the proposed quarry's target market. The majority of the limestone to be mined is targeted for the Houston and southeast Texas market, thus the need for the railroad. Cost of rail transportation is only 20-30 percent the cost of transporting by truck. Another factor entering the equation is area geology. The Houston area has very little limestone and customers pay \$10-\$12 per ton for crushed rock in southeast Texas, as opposed to a \$3-\$4 per ton price in the San Antonio area market.

Visit the
neighbors

Page 5

The largest of Vulcan's area quarries is located on Loop 1604 near O'Connor Rd. in northeast San Antonio. Of the location's 1,000 available acres, 336 is currently being mined. The plant's entrance is decorated with flowered landscaping and large live oak trees. Offices are small, as a minimum of indoor space is needed for supervisory and accounting personnel.

There are no paved roads within the quarry. There are, however, clearly defined vehicle paths marked with directional signs. Automobile and light truck drivers are warned by large signs to always yield right-of-way to the mining equipment. Some of the quarry's rolling stock is huge. Forty-ton dump trucks with gigantic tires rumble along the quarry floor. A water truck moves about constantly spraying the surface to prevent the stirring of dust by vehicle movement. Trucks ready to leave the facility must first drive through a wheel-wash near the plant's exit. Truck scales interfaced to the office computer system make note of load weights. If a truck is overweight, the computer will not process a delivery ticket and the truck is not allowed to leave until some of its cargo is unloaded.

The 1604 quarry is also home to two asphalt plants. Crushed rock in various sizes is stored in a row of large bins. Tanks containing

asphalt oil rise five stories high next to a rock conveying system. The asphalt plants are modern and give off little, if any, foul odor. The remains of torn-up roadways are piled nearby awaiting recycling. The old road surface is ground up and mixed with new asphalt with 20 percent of the mixture being recycled material.

The heart of the quarry is an immense open-ended pit that could easily house a small city, theme park, or golf course. The high cliff sides of the pit reveal layers of limestone faced with varying amounts of red clay. A large drilling rig is perched high atop one of the cliffs and drills 3 1/2 to 6-inch diameter holes straight down to the level of the pit's floor. These blast holes are spaced 16 feet apart and are filled with ammonium nitrate pellets which have been treated with diesel fuel at an outside vendor's facility. Dynamite, now considered old technology, is no longer used in quarry blasting. Explosive operations at Vulcan facilities are performed by an independent vendor.

The blasting is controlled to loosen the limestone from the quarry wall. The process produces what looks like the aftermath of a landslide. The rock does not fly in all directions. Instead, it simply slides toward the open floor of the pit. Minutes after a blast, the heavy equipment rolls to the scene to begin the process of loading the rock into huge dump trucks. The trucks carry their loads to the plant's rock crusher.

The large limestone chunks are pulverized into various sizes according to how the crusher is set. Sizes vary according to intended use. The smallest is used in asphalt. A slightly larger size is used in ready-mix concrete. A still larger size is used for road base material.

The crusher is noisy to anyone working close by. At Vulcan's Huebner Rd. quarry, upscale neighborhoods ring the plant. If one stands next to a house near the quarry rim, a dull hum can be heard during the plant's daylight operating hours.

A visitor entering the Huebner Rd. quarry was unaware of a blast that

■ Heavy equipment moves about on the floor of one of Vulcan's San Antonio area quarries. (Photo by Michael Stern)

occurred just after entering the plant. No sound or vibration was felt from the blast, which was detonated approximately one-half mile from the quarry office.

Vulcan spent approximately \$1 million to install a water recycling plant at the 1604 facility. The crushed rock has to be washed in water to remove clay deposits. During the washing process, 3,800 gallons of water per minute is used. The recycling equipment is able to clarify and return 78 percent of the water for reuse. Ransdell said the proposed Medina County quarry would have such a water recycling system.

Vulcan uses concrete bunkers for secondary containment of asphalt oil and diesel fuel. These bunkers are designed to prevent petroleum product contamination of the underground water sup-

ply. According to Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission guidelines, secondary containment systems are mandatory for diesel fuel storage tanks, but not for asphalt oil containers. Asphalt oil is exempted from mandatory containment regulations since it solidifies quickly in ambient temperatures and

poses no risk of contaminating the water supply. In this case, Vulcan exceeds TNRCC standards.

Vulcan's proposed quarry will be its largest in the greater San Antonio area. Approximately 2,000 acres of land will be occupied by the plant although not all of the acreage will be mined.

3-20-00
Medina Valley
Times



MINING THE DEPTHS

Vulcan Materials Southwest Division president Tom Ransdell displays a water recycling system at the company's 1604 quarry. (Photo by Michael Stern)

See related stories, pages 4 and 5.

Neighbors find quarry pleasant company

Julie Dunnivant
STAFF WRITER

In the past five years, the Helotes has grown from a one stop town to a bustling city full of businesses and new families.

Sitting right on the edge of the city limits and backing up to Sandra Day O'Connor High school is a Vulcan quarry.

As school lets out for the day, quarry trucks share road space with school buses, all patiently waiting for the traffic light to change so they can move out.

O'Connor was built only a few years ago; Vulcan was already in operation.

Just down Hwy. 16, less than 200 yards, sits a gated subdivision, so new all the houses haven't been sold and the landscape still looks raw.

A sign on the front informs motorists passing by that homes for the area begin in the \$90,000 range.

Principal Gloria Keller said did not return calls on how the school has dealt with having Vulcan right next door.

At the city hall, City Secretary Elvie Fernandez said Vulcan doesn't put anything on the tax roles but the business has been easy to work with over the last 20 years and conscientious when it blasts rock from the earth.

"They've been here a long time," Fernandez said. "They call us when they're going to blast and that's the only time we usually get complaints from citizens."

Fernandez estimated the quarry blasted once a month but looking back on her calendar found March to be a busy month with blasts six times in the past three weeks.

"That's a lot of activity for them," she said. "If you live here you just don't notice it."

Residents and businesses near other Vulcan quarries said

the same thing.

The only complaint Clark High School Principal Larry Martin had centered on old quarries, no longer in use that weren't owned by Vulcan.

"Our exterminator tells us the standing water there is the reason we have so many mosquitos," Martin said.

Martin, a Devine native, worked for the school through the 1980s and returned in 1997.

"The quarry was here first," he said. "In the [1980s] the blasts used to rock the school but we don't get very many blasts anymore."

Clark is located less than a mile from the Vulcan site.

"As far as noise is concerned we're removed from it," he said. "We have no problems with any dust, noise or air pollution."

He said the train tracks Vulcan uses to transfer rock to IH-10 runs in front of the

company

school and sometimes poses a traffic problem when students were getting out at lunch or the end of the day.

"You have to be on top of the quarry to see it," Martin said. "It's just not noticeable."

Diane Pipes is raising her family in the Shavano area and her son, Nathan, is a junior at Clark who plays on the football team.

Her parents live in Castrolville.

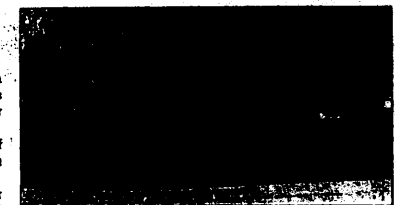
"The football field is in the corner of the school that backs up to the quarry," Pipes said. "I've sat out on that field during games and didn't know the quarry was there. I don't hear it and I don't see the blasts."

Pipes and her husband live approximately five miles from the Vulcan site but have friends whose homes back up to the pit.

"These people are 100 yards from the edge of the quarry site," she said. "They're new to the area and said they don't really hear the noise except the beeping the trucks make when they back up."

Her friends bought a home instead of building and when it came to inspections before closing the deal, the house's foundation passed with no problems.

"The quarry was here before most of these houses and the school," Pipes said. "The home in Shavano Park sell for over



A landscaped entrance greets visitors to Vulcan's 1604 quarry. (Photo by Michael Stern)

\$100,000 and in Shavano Creek the going price is \$500,000. These people could live anywhere they want and they chose here."

“These people could live anywhere they want and they chose here.”

Diane Pipes
Shavano area resident

there were health hazards associated with being near the quarry.

San Antonio is growing mostly on the north side, she said and quarries are all around.

"This isn't a total disaster for the [Quilhi] area," Pipes said. "Vulcan will help the community. I understand people don't want growth but you have to embrace what is natural to your area."

Of all the quarries Vulcan operates in the San Antonio area, the one that most closely

resembles the proposed Quilhi site is on Loop 1604 at O'Connor Road.

Trucks rumble out of the Vulcan entrance. The only reason a driver would take the exit, right now, is to go into the quarry.

A high dollar housing development is going up right across the street and long established subdivisions line the loop facing it, along with Mullberger Nursery.

The streets are cleaned and on each side middle income families with small children live; toys scattered in the front yards.

Patrice Burkhardt is self employed and works at home, just off Bulverde Road, grooming dogs.

She doesn't hear the quarry blasts nor does she notice any extra dust in her house; her two daughters suffer no air pollution related diseases like asthma.

In all, Burkhardt said she doesn't notice the Vulcan pit. It's just another business that's sprung up on the loop.

3-20-00
Medina Valley
Times
2nd Article

3/16/00

Ref. 21

Finding out the real facts

Dear Editor:

Until recently, we were members of the opposition to the proposed Quihi quarry. Our mind was changed when we decided to further investigate the allegations and concerns by the opponent's leadership.

We contacted a Vulcan representative to inquire about the dangers, the environmental hazards and the effect the quarry would have on the local area. As residents living relatively close to the proposed quarry site, we are concerned about what's to come. We were told we would not experience any changes in my quiet lifestyle due to flying rocks, dust, toxic waste or flooding. We also learned that the quarry would have a huge positive effect to the county and to ourselves as taxpayers.

We then furthered our investigation. We traveled to Helotes to visit the quarry located there. It is hardly noticeable and has a new, beautiful high school on its north side, the Helotes Little League on its south side, and households and businesses scattered throughout the area.

Thinking there must not be any danger here, we then proceeded to the Huebner quarry where we noticed things again to be exactly as we were told by Vulcan. There are hundreds of nice homes surrounding

the quarry. It also can hardly be noticed from the road because there is a big rock fence built along the property. There was a railroad running along the side of the quarry and through the middle of these expensive neighborhoods. Again, we noticed no evidence of danger at this location, but evidence of prosperity.

Upon our return, we contacted the leader of the Medina County Environmental Action Association. We asked him if he would have the Vulcan people attend the next opposition meeting. We felt it was important for the citizens to hear both sides of the story. The answer he gave us was "absolutely not." We informed him that we could take our names off the petition list, because we didn't have to have any part of his organization.

We recommend to anyone concerned to do what we did and investigate on your own to find out the facts surrounding the proposed quarry.

We are not children following the Pied Piper. We would hate to see this county lose yet another opportunity for economic growth because citizens failed to find out for themselves the real facts.

Jon & Elizabeth Welder
Medina Lake.

Hondo Anvil Herald Letters to the Editor 3/16/00

Ref. 22

Your turn

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861

Fax: (830) 426-3348

Quarry will bring many benefits

Dear Editor:

As lifetime residents and involved members of the county, we support the Medina County quarry, not just for our own benefit, but for the benefit of the citizens of the community.

When Vulcan Materials approached us about the quarry, we took time to learn about the company and the relationship they have with other communities where their quarries are located. We were pleased to discover the emphasis Vulcan put on being a good community citizen. In fact, just last month, Tom Kanadell, President of Vulcan's Southwest Division, received the Uvalde Area Development Foundation's award at the annual Chamber of Commerce banquet.

As a neighbor to the ninth largest (and one of the fastest growing) cities in the U.S., growth for us is inevitable. Yet Medina County continues to resist corporate growth and instead has experienced tremendous residential growth. The quarry would bring jobs to the county, so fewer of our residents would have to make long commutes to San Antonio or other distant locations.

Let's welcome companies that can bring economic prosperity and help improve our county's quality of life.

Every landowner and resident in the county benefits when a corporation like Vulcan comes in and converts agricultural exempt land to commercial land. For example, we pay \$1,200 annually in taxes on the 1800 acres Vulcan plans to convert to the quarry site. Vulcan, which incidentally, does not plan to ask for a tax abatement, will eventually pay \$600,000 annually in taxes.

We are pleased that approximately \$450,000 of those tax dollars would go to the Hondo Independent School District, reducing the need for costly school bonds. The other \$150,000 would go to the county, again helping minimize tax increases for citizens. Approximately \$7 million will be pumped into the local economy to pay for salaries, supplies, services and other operating expenses.

We recommend you visit the Vulcan quarries in Helotes and in San Antonio at Huebner Road. The

Helotes quarry is adjacent to O'Connor High School, one of SA's newest schools. The Huebner Road quarry is south of Clark High School, surrounded by some of the most expensive homes in the city. These people bought their \$200,000 to \$1 million-plus homes knowing the quarry was their neighbor.

Our grandson, who attends Clark, was not aware the quarry backed up to the athletic fields that he practices on daily. None of the students wear masks or were warned to drink bottled water. In fact, he has never seen dust, flying rocks or heard dynamite blasts.

We have friends and relatives in the Cliff area near Medina Lake who also live within a mile of a rock quarry. They tell us the quarry has never been a problem for them.

The quarry rock will be moved by trains limited to a speed of 20 mph in the area. This will avoid causing harm to wildlife and livestock. Their eating habits and reproduction cycles will not be affected and crop growth will be unimpeded. The slow speed will significantly lower the noise level and aid in pedestrian safety. Vulcan also plans to run the railroad either over or under the ground at major roadways in the county to reduce traffic hazards.

The availability of commercial transportation makes the agricultural land in the county more marketable, thus increasing its value.

Surrounding towns like Hondo, La Costa, Davinc, Natalia, Lytle and neighborhoods in San Antonio such as The Dominion and Shavano Estates have railroads running through them.

Many claim we are acting out of greed, but this is not true. We would never harm the community that we love, where we have raised our children, and that has been a part of our families for generations.

We ask each of you to take the opportunity to learn more about Vulcan, the communities where their quarries are located, and the benefits that have been afforded to the residents in those communities.

Jean & Clovis Boedime
Castroville

Ref. 23

The Hondo Anvil Herald, Thursday, March 16, 2000, Sec. 2, Page 5

Horrendous impact

Dear Editor:

We oppose the limestone quarry in Medina County proposed by Vulcan Materials Company. This location has the danger of becoming the largest such operation in southern Texas. The impact this mega-quarry will have on our air, aquifer, roads, property values and country tranquility is beyond reason.

The four of us bought this property less than six months ago. We moved out here to get away from all the air pollution and poise in San Antonio. Approximately one and one half months later, we find out Vulcan wants to have a limestone quarry less than a mile from our homes. Our children and grandchildren currently suffer from respiratory problems. The dust this quarry will create will aggravate their respiratory problems further, more so than living in SA with the smog and other pollutants. It may even create more health problems for them as well as us.

The proposed quarry will be located in a recharge area for the Edwards Aquifer. Because of the blasting and depth of the quarry, a real possibility of aquifer contamination exists if a spill of hazardous material occurs. Another concern is the effect this type of blasting will have on the wells in our area. If any of the wells collapse from the blasting, who will be responsible for fixing them? I'm sure Vulcan with all of its lawyers, will find a way to put the cost and responsibility on the residents of Medina County. If the water is contaminated, can they fix that? Vulcan can not guarantee there will be no problems with the well(s) or with the aquifer water being contaminated.

There is also the concern about the Medina Lake Dam which is already suffering structural deterioration. The blasting that will be done at the quarry will certainly cause more damage. Will Vulcan be held responsible for the collapse of the dam and the damage that will result from its collapse? Or will the residents of Medina County have to suffer the loss as well as the cost?

Another concern is for our children on the school bus. The increase in large, poorly maintained trucks, on a limited number of county roads, puts everyone at risk, especially the innocent children who occupy the many school buses which travel this area.

Will they be able to replace or repair even one of the children if there was a major accident due to their trucks?

The railroad tracks that will go through our area to the quarry will destroy the wildlife and the serenity of country living. These tracks will split farms and ranches that have been in existence for over 100 years, making it hard for them to be efficient. The additional danger and noise of the constant movement of materials on these tracks produces hazards this community should not have to experience.

Once Vulcan's quarry is in operation, there is nothing to stop them from having a cement factory, or asphalt producing facility which they have managed to do at other sites. This would further add to the horrendous impact on northern Medina County.

We bought property out here because of it being God's country. It is so peaceful, clean and quiet. Now Vulcan wants to come with their blasting, heavy equipment, railroad and noise in all their glory, stating they will be a contribution to the tax rolls and bring 125 jobs to the area. There is no guarantee the jobs will be filled with Medina County residents. More likely, Bexar County will benefit from the jobs, and that is where the money from those jobs will be spent. At the very least, the upper echelon will be filled with persons that they bring with them, who do not live in our area. Some of the labor jobs may possibly be filled with people from Medina County.

Do you think the owners of Vulcan would live next to a limestone rock crushing quarry with all of the noise, dust and who knows what else? We do not think they would. No one would by choice, hence, our property value will go down.

Southwest Texas has numerous other areas where limestone may be mined with less impact on the environment or its residents. Without your support and active participation, Medina County will be damaged beyond our ability to correct.

Donald & Sharon Harp
Sean & Kimberly Feneley
Hondo

(Editor's note: We received an almost identical, point-for-point letter on the same subject from Medina County property owners Alfred and Jerriene Bishop of Copperas Cove.)

Medina Valley Times

Article

3/9/00

Ref. 24

PAGE 5 MEDINA VALLEY TIMES MARCH 9, 2000

Most quarry protesters skipped commissioners court

Michael Stern
STAFF WRITER

There were plenty of available seats at Monday's commissioners court meeting, in sharp contrast to the previous week's packed courtroom.

At that meeting, Dr. Robert Fitzgerald, chairman of the Medina County Environmental Action Association, was allowed to express the group's concerns over Vulcan Materials Co.'s quarry proposed for a site between Quilhi and Medina Lake.

Fitzgerald questioned whether County Judge David Montgomery or any individual commissioners had met

with one or more Vulcan officials to discuss the quarry project. Fitzgerald was promised a written reply to his inquiry.

As of Tuesday, only Commissioner Royce Hartmann had replied in writing.

Hartmann confirmed one private meeting at his home with Vulcan officials in October to discuss their plans.

Business conducted by commissioners included:

- Granted final approval to Unit II of the Fawn Valley Subdivision located off CR 4686 between Dunlay and Castroville.

- Voted in favor of final

approval of the Devine Hills Subdivision Unit II located off CR 7711.

- Entered into a maintenance contract with Gillette Air Conditioning Co., Inc., of San Antonio for services of the heat, ventilation, and air conditioning system at the new county jail. The two-year contract will cost \$8,724 and will provide preventative maintenance and system repairs. Wayne Gondeck of DRG Architects recommended using Gillette, as they had originally installed the HVAC system and have been providing warranty service. The maintenance contract will bear a January 1, 2000 start

date. Gillette has been providing filter changes and other service since that date.

- Beverly Lutz, assistant director of federal programs, received approval of an addendum to the county's contract with the Alamo Area Council of Governments (AACOG) for home-delivered meals. The addendum is a necessary step in order to secure \$653 in extra funds which have become available for the nutrition program.

- Lutz also secured the court's preliminary approval of an interagency cooperation contract between the county and the Greater Randolph Area Services Program, Inc.

(GRASP) for rural public transportation. The agreement calls for GRASP vehicles and drivers to provide transportation services for Guadalupe County residents in the Seguin area. The contract will mean vans and drivers from Medina County will not have to travel to the Seguin area whenever a single trip is requested. GRASP will be paid only for actual services provided.

- Approved a lease between the county and Jose and Elena J. Rodriguez for a refuse collection station located north of Devine near the corner of Hwy. 173 and CR 6642. The contract replaces

an expiring lease on another location. The lease will call for an annual payment of \$2,000 and will have a start date of March 1, 2000.

- Approved a donation agreement giving \$3,000 per year to the Castroville Volunteer Fire Department.

- Voted to seek bids for paving oils and emulsion. The current contract for these materials expires April 6, 2000.

- Announced an animal control workshop will be held March 23 at 1 p.m. A subdivision rules and regulations workshop is also in the works, although no time and date have been decided.

Castroville News Bulletin March 9, 2000

att moved to San Antonio and joyfully brought their daughters Susan and Carolyn into the world. Dr. Peery worked in various areas of private business in San Antonio, among them being WOAI Radio, and also taught in many areas in San Antonio including Fox Tech High School's Continuing Education Program and then on to become a Professor of Business at St. Mary's University. During his 50's Dr. Peery made the decision to attempt to gain a Ph.D. in marketing and business administration. Eventually Dr. Peery finished his course work, wrote his doctoral dissertation which was accepted, and was awarded his Ph.D. degree in the late '60s. A move was then made to The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, where Professor Peery taught marketing and business administration for nine years before moving back to San Antonio.

A Memorial Service for Dr. Peery will be held at Laurel Heights United Methodist Church Wednesday, March 15, 2000, at 10 a.m. in the main sanctuary. Memorial gifts should be directed to the Laurel Heights United Methodist Church Music Department, 227 E. Woodlawn, San Antonio, Texas 78212.

St. Louis Catholic Church in Castroville will celebrate a Mass of Resurrection for Dr. Peery Monday, March 20, 2000 at 8:30 a.m. These memorial gifts may be directed to the St. Louis School Endowment fund, Castroville, Texas, 78009.

Commissioner met with quarry organizers

QUILHI - Medina County Environment Action Association chairman Dr. Robert Fitzgerald received his first reply from a county commissioner this week. Pct. 1 commissioner Royce Hartmann addressed questions put to commissioners court by Fitzgerald at its Feb. 28 meeting.

At that meeting, Fitzgerald asked the court if any members had met formally or informally with officials from Vulcan Materials Co. concerning their plans to open a limestone quarry between Quilhi and Medina Lake. Specifically, Fitzgerald asked if there had been any requests for commissioners to invoke eminent domain powers to help Vulcan secure rights-of-way for a planned railroad spur.

Hartmann replied that he had an informal meeting at his home in October, 1999 with two Vulcan representatives and a neighbor in order to "get a rundown on what they would study."

Hartmann also stated in the letter, "I will not exercise my power for Vulcan in condemning property for a road right-of-way or a rail right-of-way."

Ref. 25

Castroville News Bulletin

Article

3/9/00

Hondo Anvil Herald

Letter to Editor 3/2/00

Ref. 26

The Hondo Anvil Herald, Thursday, March 2, 2000, Sec. 2, Page 5

Your turn

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861

Fax: (830) 426-3346

Vulcan strives to be a good neighbor

Dear Editor:

Over the past several weeks there has been much discussion related to Vulcan Materials Company's evaluation of a possible limestone quarry in northeastern Medina County. As I have indicated publicly, we are studying all factors that are important in an evaluation of a project such as this.

As I said at the public meeting in Quihi on Feb. 3, before we decide to go forward with the filing for necessary permits for such an operation we must be satisfied that we can build and operate the proposed facilities in a responsible manner. That means being a good neighbor and having no negative impact on the surrounding environment.

The Edwards Limestone formation is well known for its use as a superior construction material. This limestone

is the key "building block" for the construction of homes, schools, churches and highways not only in the local area but also in many other locations of Texas where construction materials are scarce. Medina County has an abundant supply of Edwards Limestone and the utilization of this resource means jobs for local residents and tax dollars for the improvement of school facilities and sensible roadway and infrastructure development.

As we continue our evaluation of this project, members of my staff or myself are always available to listen to input from concerned citizens of Medina County. I hope it is evident that we are being open with this community about our plans. Contrary to some reports, I have never met privately with any elected official of Medina County

regarding our proposed operation. Representatives of Vulcan have had conversations with several county commissioners to understand transportation routes and to inform these public officials of the nature of this project.

Vulcan Materials Company strives to be a good neighbor and corporate citizen in all the communities in which we operate. We have many local examples of our success in this effort, i.e., San Antonio, Knippa and Uvalde. We have demonstrated in many instances that we know how to develop a state of the art construction aggregate facility, being good stewards of the environment as well as responsive to the concerns and needs of our neighbors.

Tom Ransdell
President Southwest Division
Vulcan Materials Company

Castroville News Bulletin

Article

3/2/00

Ref. 27

as "strong arm tactics" by Hondo owner advocate Janet Ahmad, who has championed the Payne case since last June. Ahmad is president of Hondo

and the contract called for this amount to be paid out in \$100

When they did not do so, city crews made the disconnection Monday morning at 7:30 a.m.

Schueling released an official statement to the news media Monday. The statement reads as follows: "For several

Code of Ordinances. We have extended them every accommodation possible in light of the circumstances and they

The Paynes continued living in their home without water and electricity as of Tuesday.

Quarry railroad spurs not all they appear

Michael Stern
Staff Writer

The potential of trains laden with limestone rumbling through the Quihi area countryside has fired up citizens objecting to a quarry proposed for the north central part of the county.

A map of potential spur routes has been distributed by

quarry opponents seeking support in their efforts to block the project.

Vulcan Materials Co. officials are exploring rights-of-way for the proposed railroad spur that will connect their quarry with Union Pacific tracks near Dunlap. Vulcan Southwest Division president Tom Ransdell said on decision on the spur's route has been made, although he did agree the spur will join the Union Pacific tracks in the area of the Creelwood subdivision on the north side of Hwy 90. Ransdell said any maps showing proposed spur routes are purely speculative and were not distributed by Vulcan. He also stressed no right-of-way acquisitions have been secured by Vulcan.

Dr. Robert Fitzgerald

trains per day will leave the quarry loaded with materials. If a like number of trains pulling empty cars returns each day to the quarry site, a total of an additional six trains per day will pass the Creelwood subdivision. An average of 25 Union Pacific trains currently pass Creelwood each day according to Mark Davis, official spokesman for Union Pacific.

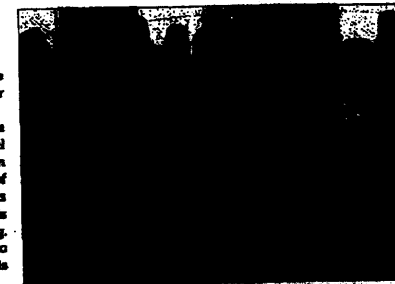
Quarry opposers met last Thursday in Hondo at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Hondo. The Medina County Environmental Action Association, the official name of the group organized by Dr. Robert Fitzgerald and his wife, Alysia, heard from members of CLEAN, or Citizens League for Environmental Action Now, a

similar battle against limestone and cement operations in their area.

CLEAN president Leslie Greven and members Mel McClintock and Jill Ponder advised the estimated crowd of 180 to put forth their best efforts now before the Vulcan Materials Co. project gets too far along. Greven said it is very difficult to fight a plant's activities once it is up and running.

Key Turner of San Antonio, who was instrumental in the defeat of the proposed Applewhite Reservoir in Bexar County, also made an appearance to encourage the group.

Fitzgerald invited county officials to the meeting, but only Sheriff Wesley Scott attended. Scott was not asked to speak to



Quarry opponents crowd into commissioners court Monday. The county judge agreed to answer a list of questions presented by the group in a later letter. (Photo by Michael Stern)

the group. Ransdell said neither he nor any other Vulcan official was invited to the meeting.

NCEAA members have been circulating petitions in recent weeks and have obtained over

500 signatures of area residents opposed to the quarry. The group is also sporting bumper stickers that proclaim "Don't mess with Quihi", and developing a web site which should be up and running soon.

03/02/00 11:43 FAX 1 800 638 3515 CASTROVILLE NEWS BULLETIN 3/2/00

Page 2, The Hondo Anvil Herald, Thursday, March 2, 2000

Quihi residents show strong opposition for Vulcan limestone quarry

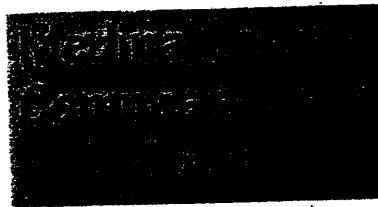
Medina County Commissioners' Court held their weekly meeting with standing room only in the court. The number of visitors signified the strong opposition to the proposed Vulcan limestone quarry in Quihi.

• Judge David Montgomery began the meeting with a public participation forum and allowed Dr. Robert Fitzgerald, chairman of the Medina County Environmental Action Association, four minutes to speak.

Dr. Fitzgerald addressed the court with a prepared speech, that read in part: "I appreciate being allowed to address the court. I represent the MCEAA. We are united and steadfast in opposition to the quarry and railroad for many reasons.

"One of our concerns which involves you, the commissioners' court, is the use of the commissioners' court to obtain a road right-of-way for them (Vulcan), a private corporation, which could subsequently be accompanied by a railroad built on the same right-of-way.

"It has come to our attention that Vulcan Materials Company approached the Hondo Texas Department of Transportation requesting that a road be built from FM 2676 to the quarry site. The Hondo TexDot replied that such a road could only be built if the right-of-way for it had been already obtained, and that the commissioners court was the appropriate governing body to obtain the needed right-of-way.



"The court could accomplish this by exercising its authority to invoke eminent domain and condemn the land needed for the right-of-way.

"As Medina County taxpayers, our concerns are as follows:

"Are any of the county commissioners or the judge aware of the above information at this time?

"Have any of you already met with any Vulcan representatives officially or unofficially? If so, who attended the meeting, when was the meeting held, and where? What was discussed?

"If no meeting has been held, has a meeting in the future - official or unofficial - been scheduled? If so when, where, and with whom?

"If Vulcan officials ask you, the court, to exercise your power of eminent domain and condemn property for the road right-of-way and rail right-of-way for them - a private company, will you do so?

"If you condemn the property, where will the money come from to pay the landowners for the condemned land?

Fitzgerald concluded his presentation by requesting that at least two representative from MCEAA be allowed to attend any meeting with Vulcan officials and participate in the discussion and recommended that any Medina County citizens wishing to attend, be allowed to do so.

Montgomery stated he would answer these concerns in writing and hoped the commissioners would do likewise.

• Approval was granted for Marion Taylor, Justice of the Peace Pct. 4, to enter into an interlocal agreement between Medina County and the Department of Public Safety for a program that would flag the drivers license of individuals who fail to appear in court for traffic tickets. Taylor explained that at this time warrants are issued for anyone that fails to appear, but with this program their driver's license would be flagged and the individual would not be allowed to renew their license until all tickets were taken care of.

• Approval was given for a donation agreement between Medina County and Mico Volunteer Fire Department for a contribution of \$2000.

• The board accepted Commissioner Royce Hartmann's request to accept bids for a new rubber tire front end loader. The agreement will have a guaranteed buy-back for the lease/purchase plan, with the trade in of the old loader.

Ref. 29

Hondo Anvil Herald
Letter to the Editor
2/24/00

Your turn HONDO ANVIL HERALD 2/24/2000

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861

Fax: (830) 426-3346

Why isn't the quarry on the county agenda?

Dear Editor:

Do the people of Medina County think that a matter concerning the roads and highways can be placed on Commissioners Court agenda for discussion? I can tell them that, if County Judge David Montgomery doesn't want it on the agenda, it won't get there. What makes matters worse, county commissioners won't stand up to him. Let me explain: I have asked Judge Montgomery three times to bring out in the open the secret discussion he and other commissioners are making with the Vulcan Materials company if they open a limestone quarry in Medina County. I have been informed verbally and in writing that all the commissioners are against placing the project and its effect on our roads on the agenda for discussion. Why?

At least three county roads will have to be crossed by the railroad tracks to reach the Union Pacific line at Dunlay. If the route goes along Quilhi Creek, we can expect flooding of the countryside and homesites by the damming effect of the high berms which would be necessary to elevate the railroad track. Remember the local flooding caused by the railroad berm at Creekwood Acres in October 1998? Do we want this to happen again? Another question: Are the taxpayers

going to pay for the necessary country road improvements required by the huge gravel trucks which will haul 15% of the 200 million tons mined from the quarry site? These roads, if the quarry does come into being, would have to be improved and in place before the proposed quarry is opened in order to comply with the clean air standards of the TNRCC. So who pays the bill? Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer? I am sure Vulcan Materials would appreciate your generosity in this regard. These and other matters are issues that the county commissioners and county judge won't discuss in an open forum. Who knows what they have discussed in their secret meetings with Vulcan officials?

Government officials work for the people who elected them. They should listen to the people of Medina County and not to big out-of-state corporations that come here for one purpose: to make hundreds of millions of dollars in the next 50 years. They have little concern about polluting our air and water or endangering our health and lives as long as they can meet certain weak government standards. To them, the small fines they pay are just another cost of doing business.

It is a sorry state of affairs that greed has come between friends and

neighbors. A few citizens have been offered their "30 pieces of silver" and greed has gotten the best of them. Their friends and neighbors, however, haven't been consulted or even considered in this scheme. After all, they will be wealthy and they can move away if they don't like the dust, noise, water pollution or the menace of gravel trucks. To prove my point, a family of four was killed a quarter of a mile from the home of one of the families that has sold an option to lease land for the quarry site. This gravel truck had faulty brakes.

We call upon the people of Medina County to unite and send a message to Vulcan Materials to go elsewhere to mine their limestones. Tell them no railroad right-of-way easements will be given. Tell them we will oppose them at every level. We must do this since our local government won't listen to us.

County officials have denied us our right to freedom of speech. Remember this when you go to the polls in March and November, and especially remember this in two more years when the other two commissioners and the county judge come up for reelection.

Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald, Chairman
Medina County Environmental
Action Association

Ref. 30

Castroville News Bulletin

Letter to the Editor

2/24/00

News Bulletin
Thursday, February 24, 2000

6

Letters to the Editor

Get county's ear at election time

Editor:

The third time was not the charm for Quith.

Question: Do the people of Medina County think that a matter concerning the roads and highways can be placed on Commissioners Court agenda for discussion? I can tell them that if David Montgomery doesn't want it on the agenda it won't get there. What makes matters worse, county commissioners won't stand up to him.

Let me explain. I have asked Judge Montgomery three times to bring out in the open the secret discussions he and other commissioners are making with the Vulcan Materials Company if they open a limestone quarry in Medina County. I have been informed verbally and in writing that all the commissioners are against placing the Vulcan Quarry project and its effect on our roads on the agenda for discussion. Why?

At least three county roads will have to be crossed by the railroad tracks to reach the Southern Pacific rail line at Dunlay. If the route goes along the Quith Creek we can expect flooding of the countryside and homesites by the damming effect of the high berms which would be necessary to elevate the railroad track. Remember the local flooding caused by the railroad berm at Creekwood Acres in October 1998? Do we want this to happen again? Another

question: Are the taxpayers going to pay for the necessary county road improvements required by the huge gravel trucks which will haul 15 percent of the 200 million tons mined from the quarry site? These roads, if the quarry does come into being, would have to be improved and in place before the proposed quarry is opened in order to comply with the clean air standards of the TNRCC. So who pays the bill, Mr. and Mrs. Taxpayer? I am sure Vulcan Materials would appreciate your generosity in this regard. These and other matters are issues that the county commissioners and county judge won't discuss in an open forum. Who knows what they have discussed in their secret meetings with Vulcan officials!

We want to remind the judge and commissioners of Medina County that all government officials - county, state, and federal - work for the people who elected them. They should listen to the people of Medina County and not to big out-of-state corporations that come here for one purpose: to make hundreds of millions of dollars in the next 50 years. They have little concern about polluting our air and water or endangering our health and lives as long as they can meet certain weak government standards. To them, the small fines they pay are just another cost of doing business.

It is a sorry state of affairs that greed has come between friends and neighbors. A few

citizens have been offered their "thirty pieces of silver" and greed has gotten the best of them. Their friends and neighbors, however, haven't been consulted or even considered in this scheme. After all, they will be wealthy and they can move away if they don't like the dust, noise, water pollution or the menace of gravel trucks. To prove my point a family of four was killed a quarter of a mile from the home of one of the families that has sold an option to lease land for the quarry site. This gravel truck had faulty brakes.

We call upon the people of Medina County to unite and send a message to Vulcan Materials to go elsewhere to mine their limestones. Tell them no railroad right-of-way easements will be given. Tell them we will oppose them at every level. We must do this since our local government won't listen to us.

In closing, I would remind the voters of Medina County that the county commissioner and county judge have denied us our right to freedom of speech. Remember this when you go to the polls in March and November, and especially remember this in two more years when the other two commissioners and the county judge come up for re-election. If they won't listen now, they won't listen later. Don't mess with Quith!

Dr. Robert T. Fitzgerald,
Chairman
Medina County
Environmental Action
Association

Bumper stickers added to Quihi anti-quarry arsenal

Michael Stern
STAFF WRITER

QUINTI -Petitions and bumper stickers are among means making the rounds as area residents step up their efforts to block a proposed limestone quarry.

The Medina County Environmental Association will meet Thursday at 7 pm in the St. Paul Lutheran Church hall in Hondo. Group members went door to door throughout the area asking residents to sign a petition opposing the Vulcan

Materials Co. project. The quarry title currently under review by Vulkan is located between Qubbi and Medina Lake.

MCEEA chairman Robert Fitzgerald turned in a formal request at the courthouse last week seeking to have the issue placed on the formal agenda of commissioners court. Fitzgerald received a letter of response dated Feb. 16 and signed by County Judge David Montgomery. The letter stated that all commissioners had received a copy of

Fitzgerald's request, "and they being place on the
are all opposed to this issue Commissioners' Court



■ Dumpster stickers opposing a proposed limestone quarry are popping up throughout the Quito and Medina Lake areas. (Photo by Michael Stern)

Agenda:

Last week, Fitzgerald addressed the Texas House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources at a public hearing held at the Hondo Community Center. Rep. Ron Lewis told Fitzgerald that trying to stop the quarry would only result in a lawsuit against MCEAA as well as against Fitzgerald personally, and that trying to stop such projects are usually unsuccessful. Committee chairman David Counts politely thanked Fitzgerald for bringing the

matter to the committee's attention, effectively putting an end to the discussion.

The group had sought to hold Thursday's meeting at the site of their last meeting, the Quilt Gun Club. However, the venue's manager informed Fitzgerald that some club members object to using the site for "political meetings." Club members cannot make a formal decision regarding the building's use by MCEAA until its next regular meeting in March.

Fighting to keep rural folks in charge of rural water

Jill Dunnivant
Staff Writer

HONDO—Local groundwater districts looking to protect their turf and constituents made a heavy plea to members of the House Natural Resources Committee last

Puente, met in Hondo to gather information on local concerns.

Luana Buckner, General Manager of the Medina County Underground Water Conservation District, is all for keeping urban sprawl and

Permits Committee

MCUWCD was validated as a single county water district in 1991 and is funded by ad valorem taxes.

It is composed of a five-member board and works closely with surrounding dis-

aquifers since the creation of the EAA.

"I hate to start picking on San Antonio," Buckner said. "But it appears [the San Antonio Water system] is under the impression [water law 36.122] needs to be

1973.

Any attempt to form a regional groundwater authority would be dangerous, she said, because differing regions don't have the same interests. "We tailor our rules accordingly," Buckner told committee

to be, it will create a conflict. They don't understand our needs, and vice versa."

Suckner felt a board comprised of rural and urban interests would end up with urban areas flexing power and potentially locking their rural coun-

Ref. 32

Hondo Anvil Herald
Letter to the Editor
2/17/00

Join the fight against the quarry

Dear Editor:

Vulcan Materials Company is proposing to mine limestone at a site in North Central Medina County. As a property owner, with plans to build a home in this beautiful and ecologically fragile area, my wife and I are absolutely opposed to this quarry for many reasons.

The proposed site is over the Edwards Aquifer Recharge Zone. Take note that a rather large spill of diesel fuel occurred Jan. 14 at a Dyna Nobel, Inc., explosive mining site. This is approximately four miles from Comal Springs and Hueco Springs that flow from the Edwards Aquifer. On Jan. 24, 26 and 28, slight traces of hydrocarbons showed up in water samples taken from these springs. Think this couldn't happen here? Anyone who draws water from the aquifer should be concerned as it is the only source we have.

This is to be a mega-quarry compared to the six existing quarries located in Medina County and will be in operation for at least 50 years. It will be large enough that it will require railroad services. Since our property is located two miles from the quarry site, we are concerned with pollution from limestone dust. With the constantly blowing and ever-shifting winds along the southern es-

carpment of the Edwards Platan, everyone living miles away from the quarry will be affected. We are not looking forward to the sounds of high explosives being detonated on a regular basis or a rock crusher running all day. We pity the property owners adjoining the quarry site.

Everyone owning a parcel of land, be it large or small, has a moral responsibility to care for it. They should improve it ecologically if possible, but at least not destroy it. Those individuals involved in farming and ranching should realize this more than anyone else. My wife and I are doing our part to improve and protect our piece of Texas. Even abused and misused cedar brakes and rocks have more value than a polluting quarry and possible future landfill site. My wife and I would never subject our family members and neighbors to put up with the problems associated with an aggregate quarry by leasing or selling out to Vulcan Materials.

Vulcan Materials will not be a good neighbor to us. We are asking all of Medina County to please join with the Medina County Environmental Action League to fight this project.

Scott Conrad
San Antonio

" HONDO ADVIL HERALD 2/17/2000

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UMPTREVILLE NEWS CLARK JR 2/07/2005

Ref. 33

Medina Valley Times

Article

2/10/00

Medina Valley Times 2-10-00

Quarry-bashing fills Quihi countryside

Michael Stern
STAFF WRITER

QUIHI -- Area residents opposing a limestone quarry rallied their forces in an emotionally charged meeting last week.

Highlight of Thursday evening's meeting at the Quihi Gun Club was Vulcan Southwest Division president Tom Ransdell's maneuvering through a mine field of tough questions laid before him by project opponents. The group, which has organized under the name of The Medina County Environmental Action Association, formally adopted their mission statement before hearing a lineup of speakers that included State Representative Tracy King.

MCEAA chairman Robert Fitzgerald opened the meeting by introducing his wife

Aylene, the association treasurer, who read the minutes of the group's previous meeting. The minutes highlighted the association's goal to "fight through political channels" in an all-out attempt to thwart the proposed quarry. The quarry is to be located between Quihi and Medina Lake.

Fitzgerald then returned



State Rep. Tracy King and Robert Fitzgerald

to the microphone and told the group of 200 "we do not have any support from our government," referring to county commissioners court which had refused to discuss the quarry issue at its Jan. 31 meeting. Citing County Judge David Montgomery's warning at that meeting that anyone trying to discuss the matter in open court would be held in contempt, Fitzgerald stated, "Judge Montgomery is in contempt of his own court."

Fitzgerald used a New Braunfels quarry as an example of potential environmental risks associated with such a project by informing the group of a diesel fuel spill at that plant. Although conceding that the nearby Comal Springs were not affected by the New Braunfels acci-

dent, Fitzgerald sounded an ominous warning concerning the proposed Medina County quarry.

"Our water is precious to us," he said. "If the

Edwards aquifer becomes undrinkable, it's over," he said. "The Edwards Aquifer Authority is very interested

• See "quarry," page 3



Vulcan Materials Southwest Division president Tom Ransdell (left) and geologist Darrell Brownlow take notes at the MCEAA meeting in Quihi. (Photo by Michael Stern)

Proposed quarry draws 200 protestors

• Continued from Page 1
in this situation, although they do not have permitting authority."

The association's mission statement was read to the audience by its author, Mary Walpole. The statement read in part, "We want to continue the healthy, clean, peaceful environment that has caused our pioneer families to stay and that has attracted newcomers."

Ransdell later noted similarities in the group's mission statement compared to Vulcan's mission statement which states in part, "Our mission is...to be responsible stewards with respect to the safety and environmental impact of our operations and products..."

Rep. King promised the audience that he would make sure that Vulcan would get no special breaks or privileges in their permit application process with the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission. "I will make sure the TNRCC follows every single rule when considering this project. I'll make sure that

the law is followed," said King.

Real estate broker and Mico volunteer fire department chief Jack Love was number as he addressed the crowd. "The TNRCC rubber stamps everything," he said. "I'm against this thing. They're going to kill your way of life. You've got to fight for your way of life." Fitzgerald then asked the crowd for suggestions in drawing up a petition. After no one offered a response, Fitzgerald suggested several items including concerns over water and air pollution. "Our water supply should be made safe. I'm sure they can find limestone somewhere else in the state or county," he said. "I want to be a steward of the land," said Fitzgerald, tempering his environmental stance somewhat by saying "I am not a tree hugger."

At the urging of audience members, Fitzgerald allowed Ransdell to come to the podium. Ransdell introduced himself as having 33 years experience in the aggregates industry, the last 22 of them with Vulcan

Materials Co.

Ransdell told the group in reference to Vulcan, "I would not be with them if I didn't believe in their mission statement which is very close to yours," he said. "We will have to come to the conclusion that we can complete this project without a negative impact on the area," said Ransdell.

Accompanying Ransdell to the meeting was geologist Darrell Brownlow, who is working as a consultant to Vulcan on the project. When asked by an audience member if Vulcan had ever stopped a project because people did not want it, Ransdell replied, "Yes, we have failed to complete projects because people did not want them."

Ransdell also told the group that no rights-of-way for a proposed rail spur have yet been purchased, although contact with several property owners has been made. He also said that the quarry would primarily serve the south and east Texas markets, with a particular emphasis on the greater Houston area.

He further stated that the majority of the materials from the quarry would be shipped by rail, with the balance being delivered by truck. This fact stirred the most emotional line of questioning as Ed Hecker, a trial lawyer and area resident, brought up Vulcan's practice of allowing customers' trucks to pick up materials directly from their quarry sites. Hecker stated if a customer's truck had an accident on a road near the quarry, Vulcan would go to court and ask for a summary judgment excusing them from liability in such a case. Ransdell estimated that 60-70 percent of trucks loaded at the quarry would be Vulcan owned or leased vehicles. He said that Vulcan loads material only up to the legal limit of a particular vehicle depending on its capacity. When asked by Hecker if Vulcan checks the brakes of customer trucks, Ransdell replied they did not since it is Texas Dept. of Transportation's responsibility to do so.

Medina County resident



Vulcan Materials consulting geologist Darrell Brownlow (left) discusses the proposed quarry with Ben Ivey (center) and Max Walden. (Photo by Michael Stern)

Yvonne Peres said her children ride a school bus which travels by the proposed quarry site. "What happens when one of your trucks hits their school bus?" she asked. "Obviously we don't plan on that happening," he replied. After a brief pause he added "I don't really know how to answer that question."

Ransdell stressed three key elements being considered by Vulcan in their decision-making process. These include the needs of neighboring citizens, assessment

of environmental impact, and the economic viability of the project. He also stated that it will take anywhere from six to 18 months for Vulcan to make its final decision.

This was emphasized by Ransdell in replying to the final question of the evening. "What will it take to get you to stop your project?" asked an attendee seated on the front row. Without hesitation, Ransdell replied, "We haven't started yet."

Castroville News Bulletin

Letter to Editor

2/10/00

Ref. 34

Hondo Anvil Herald

Letter to Editor

2/10/00

Ref. 35

The Hondo Anvil Herald, Thursday, February 10, 2000, Sec. 2, Page 5

Your turn

P.O. Box 400, Hondo TX 78861

Fax: (830) 426-3348

An unwanted and undesirable neighbor

Dear Editor:

Landowners in north central Medina County, from Quihi to Dunlay, are working hard to oppose the proposed 2,000-acre Vulcan Quihi limestone quarry. This mining installation is moving at a fast pace as exploration is complete, leases with options are made, various railroad routes with marshalling yards are in consideration, truck routes are in consideration, plant size is set, Vulcan money has been allocated, plant designs are progressing and various permits are being prepared. Vulcan Materials Co. is principally engaged in the production, distribution and sales of construction materials and chemicals. Vulcan is the nation's leading producer of construction aggregate and they have all the money and resources to move the installation forward quickly.

The citizens' concerns for air, aquifer, recharge zone, land faults, roads, gravel truck dangers, trains, property values, explosions and country tranquility are real and warranted. Our problems and concerns cannot and will not be properly addressed after the quarry is quickly put into operation. It seems Vulcan has done its homework and plans to move quickly. It is their ploy to keep opposition to a very minimum, keep those in favor less than fully informed and known problems suppressed.

We, as concerned citizens should study the problems, meet with our

communities, meet with our elected officials and visit similar quarry sites. We must acknowledge that open pit quarry operations are offensive, dusty, noisy and have large amounts of explosives. These operations are notorious for being unwanted and undesirable neighbors for many reasons. Note that abandoned quarry areas fit the need and are often used for garbage dumps. With rail systems installed, this 2,000 acres could easily be used as a dump by adjoining cities.

We must remember that Vulcan is not our rich and generous Alabama-based benefactor, but is a company traded on the New York Stock Exchange to make money for their stockholders. In 1999, their materials segmented earnings were \$369,996,000. While a few in this area will make money from this mine, we all will have serious environmental exposures, dangers and accidents. Do we want to sell our legacy for this new mining neighbor?

If Vulcan can address public meetings in Quihi, Castroville and Hondo after meetings with our elected officials, then why can't concerned citizens also meet with officials? Why can't concerned citizens meet with our leading county officials under any forum? I encourage all concerned citizens to join us in the Medina County Environmental Action League to fight this project.

Lester R. Landrum
Hondo

Residents urged to take action

Editor:
Re: Proposed Vulcan Quihi
Limestone Quarry

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Respectfully,
Lester R. Landrum

Former mayor needs refresher course

Editor:

I am writing in response to last week's letter by Dwight Green. The only statement he made in his tirade that I agree with is that something stinks; it was his letter.

Dwight obviously needs a refresher course in the lessons he was supposed to have learned.

People who have integrity do not deal in innuendo or rumor. They name names and find out facts. People that have principles stand up and speak out for what they believe is right, they don't hide in the shadows of past accomplishments expecting it to cloak their present conduct.

Also, just for the record, ten people appearing at a council meeting to voice their opinion does not automatically make it the right way to vote on issues that affect the entire city.

I would like to address, with facts, those rumors that Dwight perpetuated. The property owners are Jimmy and Darla Masters, the son is Mike Masters, and the sister-in-law is me. The property he was referring to is the triangle of land at the east end of Castroville, outside the city limits. First of all, the police protection they receive is provided by the sheriff's department for which they pay

HONDO ANVIL HERALD - 2/10/2000

PA 1 House Natural Resource Committee meets in Hondo

Texas House of Representatives Committee on Natural Resources will meet in Hondo Thursday, Feb. 17, at 1 p.m. in the Hondo Community and Senior Center. Following invited speakers, the public will be allowed to give testimony on ground-water issues.

Library study committee to meet Wednesday

The Library Study Committee will meet on Wednesday, Feb. 16, at 6 p.m. at the Hondo Public Library. The meeting is open to the public and everyone is welcome to attend.

New Fountain Seniors plan monthly gathering

New Fountain Senior Citizens will have their monthly gathering Tuesday, Feb. 15, 11:30 a.m., in the Fellowship Hall of New Fountain United Methodist Church. Bring a covered dish and have fun with us.

Owl's Nest included in this issue

Don't miss this week's Owl's Nest, written and prepared by Hondo High School students, printed and inserted in the Hondo Anvil Herald as a public service of this newspaper.

Vulcan woos county citizens; studies quarry project feasibility

Representatives of Vulcan Materials have been privately briefing elected officials, community and economic development leaders of Medina County to inform them of the company's plans to build a limestone quarry in Medina County.

The proposed 2,000-acre quarry site is located northeast of Quihi, about halfway between Daisley and Medina Lake, on property owned partially by the Wurzbach and Boehme families.

Tom Ransdell, president of Vulcan Materials Co. Southwest Division, said the company's plans are still in conceptual stages and have not been internally approved.

"There is a window of about 6-to-18 months before all of our homework is done and we can come to a decision about what we want to do," he said. Still to be completed are environmental assessment work, understanding the desires and interests of the citizens of Medina County, and evaluating markets and proving internally, from an economic standpoint, whether the project is feasible.

Ransdell said there has been no effort

Quihi residents not convinced

Approximately 200 Quihi area residents attended a meeting Thursday evening at Quihi Gun Club Hall, seeking information about what the majority present consider an unwelcome, prospective new neighbor.

Previously, residents formed the Medina County Environmental Action League to fight the project.

Dr. Robert Fitzgerald, who was previously briefed privately by Vulcan Southwest President Tom Ransdell about the project, is not convinced that the company's words

can be trusted. He said at Thursday's meeting a public awareness committee was formed which will organize efforts, including a petition to be circulated, letters to be sent to area and state officials and local organizations, and possible fundraising efforts.

"We are urging landowners (who are being approached for railroad right-of-way) not to sign papers," he said, adding that there are benefits to being forced to sell through condemnation proceedings. A six-mile long

road on the company's part to try to do anything under cover. "We learned many years ago that that is not the way to conduct our business."

He said his company's record with TNRCC is not perfect. Over the last 14-15 years, they have been cited for six dust and two water quality violations in Texas. Three of the citations, he said, were under previous ownership of quarries that Vulcan now

owns; two were administrative errors; and one was a problem with a dust collector at an asphalt plant. The water quality citations were related to sending pond discharge after heavy rains at Eastland, Texas. The citations resulted in \$36,750 in fines.

"We're not perfect," he said, "but we think our record is good. It is our intention to abide by the law. We are very proud of our company

and we plan to protect the environment in the Quihi area."

Ransdell said "apprehension" is not uncommon among residents in areas of new quarries.

He said this quarry would create about 125 new jobs with an infusion of about \$20 million to \$30 million. Vulcan is a Fortune 500 company based in Birmingham, Alabama.

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Ransdell said "apprehension" is not uncommon among residents in areas of new quarries.

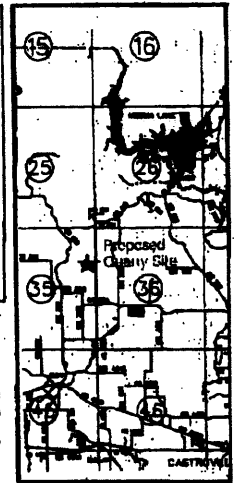
He said this quarry would create about 125 new jobs with an infusion of about \$20 million to \$30 million. Vulcan is a Fortune 500 company based in Birmingham, Alabama.

railroad spur would be built from Daisley to the site.

Fitzgerald said he has also learned that a limestone quarry does not have to be permitted, only the equipment used to mine the rock.

He believes area residents will be open to health, noise, aquifer, traffic and other problems, "like a cancer that keeps spreading."

"Many people have told us it is a done deal," he said, "but as far as we know, an option on leases is the only thing they have right now."



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CASTROVILLE NEWS BULLETIN - 2/10/2000

Castroville News Bulletin

Editorial Opinion

2/10/00

Ref. 37

Opinion

Control needed

The proposed quarry in the Quihi area is but one more example of the kind of controversy we can expect here in Medina County as inevitable development continues.

Industry of all kinds, subdivisions of all kinds, and businesses of all kinds eventually will seek to locate throughout the area, as many already have. While the county has a limited set of subdivision regulations, it has no zoning plan to govern commercial or industrial development.

Industries such as the quarry have only to meet the standards set by the regulating state agency in order to locate anywhere in the county. Objections from residential neighbors do not usually weigh heavily in the

application process for agencies such as the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission.

While Judge David Montgomery may have angered residents wanting to speak about the quarry at a recent county meeting when he denied the opportunity, he was on solid ground when he said the commission has no jurisdiction.

Yet it may be largely by choice that the county commission stays out of such matters.

A zoning plan would give the county a voice in all development, and it would be the only official voice likely to be impacted by county residents and their concerns. It may be high time for the county to take more control over industrial development. Road maintenance is great, but these days, is it enough?

Medina split on quarry

Opponents fear pollution, damage

By ZEEK MACCORMACK
EXPRESS-NEWS STAFF WRITER

HONDO — Although Vulcan Materials is only considering creating a limestone quarry in eastern Medina County, the prospect of having a \$20 million hole in the ground here already is dividing residents and elected officials.

A decision is at least one year away, but Vulcan already has lease options on about 2,000 acres for the quarry and is negotiating easements to run a rail line to the site.

"We're in the conceptual stage of looking at this location and several others for future quarry sites," said Tom Ransdell, president of the company's southwest division.

Last week about 70 residents who live around the proposed quarry site formed the Medina County Environmental Action League to fight the project.

"We're hoping that Vulcan will see the light, so to speak, and go elsewhere to find their limestone," said Robert Fitzgerald, group president.

Fitzgerald fears the quarry will pollute the air and groundwater and damage county roads. Also, he said, the new six-mile rail line from Dunlay to the quarry site would create hardships for farm-

■ See MEDINA/7B

Medina residents split by quarry plan

■ Continued from 1B

ers in its path.

But Elizabeth Wurzbach and others say those fears are unfounded. They see the quarry as a big boost for the economy here.

"We talked all this over with the company, and it's not supposed to do anybody any harm," said Wurzbach, 70, who has agreed to let Vulcan mine on her land.

She is concerned the project will be sabotaged by Fitzgerald's group, which will hold its second meeting at 7 tonight at the Quihi Gun Club.

"It's not even off the ground yet, and they're trying to stop it," Wurzbach said.

Company officials have privately briefed selected elected officials, community leaders and residents, including Fitzgerald, but have not held public meetings on the proposal.

"I certainly would think that once we have our homework done and really have something to talk about, we'd be more than glad to meet with the citizens," Ransdell said. "We do not have the necessary answers to meet with a group at this point."

Ransdell said "apprehension" is not uncommon among residents in the areas of new quarries, but he added, "We think we are a very responsible quarrying company."

Based on community feedback, Ransdell said, "Medina County is very interested in growth and very interested in more industrialization in the county."

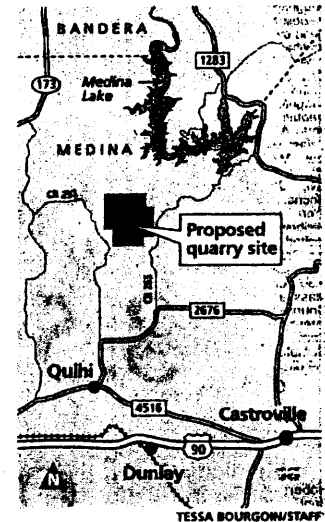
He said the quarry would create about 125 new jobs with an infusion of \$20 million to \$30 million.

"It will be quite a boon for the county of Medina," said Clovis Boehm who, like Wurzbach, is looking to move beyond hunting and grazing leases for the quarry property they agreed to lease.

"It's a good opportunity to cash in on a good deal," Boehm said. "It's not going to hurt anyone, I don't think, because Vulcan is very much environmentally aware of what's going on."

The project would require the approval of the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission, which already regulates about 14 Vulcan quarries in Texas, including four in San Antonio.

"Vulcan is not in the least con-



cerned, because they have an impeccable record at the TNRCC," Chris Schuchart, a Castroville lawyer acting as the company's community liaison, said Tuesday.

But TNRCC spokesman Patrick Shaughnessy said that since 1986, the company has been cited for six air quality violations and twice for water quality violations, resulting in \$36,750 in fines.

Citing the concerns of Fitzgerald's group, Medina County Commissioner Royce Hartman on Monday tried to place the quarry issue on a future meeting agenda or set it for a public hearing.

But he was stilled by Medina County Judge David Montgomery, who said: "This is not something for the court to take a stand on. We have no authority over it. . . . This is a private endeavor."

"We shouldn't even be in discussion on this matter."

He later called it his prerogative to override commissioners' requests on agenda items.

"The agenda is subject to the county judge's review. It's always been that way," Montgomery said. "If I decide it's not going on there, it is not going to be on there."

But a 1993 ruling by Attorney General Dan Morales said, in part: "An individual commissioner may place items of his choosing on the agenda."

zmaccormack@express-news.net

San Antonio
Express-News
February 3, 2000

Ref. 39

Hondo Anvil Herald
Article
2/3/00

HERALD

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Quihi residents oppose proposed rock quarry

A group of Quihi residents are joining together to protest a proposed rock quarry project in their area. Sixty-seven people met last week to discuss the effect such a project would have on the quality of life of the surrounding area.

The citizens believe a handful of people will be making money at the expense of many who will be affected by excess dust, blasting and a serious decline in real estate values.

They plan to form a group, Medina County Environmental Action Association, to try to stop Vulcan Materials, the contractor, from building yet another rock quarry in Medina County and to preserve the landowners' rights to clean air and a quiet lifestyle.

They have asked County Commissioner Royce Hartmann to place the issue on the agenda before Commissioners Court.

According to the organizers, representatives of Vulcan Materials have confirmed that there is a large quarry proposed for Medina County. The project, currently in planning stages,

is anticipated to be three times the combined total of the existing six quarries currently in the county.

The group has determined that Vulcan estimates that there will be 200 million tons of projected limestone removal over a 50-year period. A railroad spur will be built to transport the materials from the quarry to the existing railroad near Dunlay. The railroad will cross the Quihi-Castroville road and go either over or under FM 2676. There is expected to be two to three slow-moving trains, with at least 50 cars per train, running 24-hours a day. Vulcan plans to acquire the property for the quarry and the railroad right-of-way through long-term leases from existing landowners.

The group will meet tonight (Thursday, Feb. 3) at Quihi Dance Hall.

For information, contact any of the following: Dr. Robert Fitzgerald, 741-5040; Ted Portenier, 426-4901 (day) or 741-8335 (evening); Dr. Bob Reed, 426-3677; David Rone, 210-308-1857; Max Walden, 741-3418; Tom or Mary Walpole, 426-7122.

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Medina Valley Times
February 2, 2000

Quihi quarry gets homeowner cold shoulder

Michael Stern
STAFF WRITER

A rock quarry proposed for the Quihi area has caused nearby residents to organize in an effort to block the project. The group is particularly incensed at county commissioners' refusal to discuss the matter at their regular meeting Monday.

Robert and Alyne Fitzgerald stormed out of the court when County Judge David Montgomery abruptly announced the quarry matter would not be put on the court's agenda. "This is not a county item. We have no authority in this matter," he said. "This is not something the court

will take a stand on, and that's the end of it right there," said Montgomery.

Robert Fitzgerald said a comment by Montgomery as the court reconvened following a break prevented him from addressing the court. "He said in open court that anyone who tried to talk about the matter would be held in contempt of court. I didn't want to be held in contempt, so we left," said Fitzgerald.

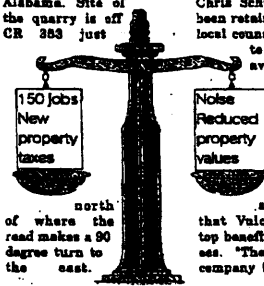
Montgomery had, in fact, reminded those in attendance of the court's rules of conduct and decorum, and that violators would be held in contempt.

The proposed quarry will

be operated by Vulcan Materials Co. Southwest Division. Vulcan Materials is a Fortune 500 company based in Birmingham, Alabama. Site of the quarry is off CR 383 just

Located on a county map, the site is halfway between Dunley and Medina Lakes as the crow flies.

Castroville attorney Chris Schuchart, who has been retained by Vulcan as local counsel, estimates up to 150 jobs at an average annual salary of \$25,000 will be provided by the quarry if and when it reaches full operating capacity. He also pointed out that Vulcan will provide top benefits for its employees. "They will be a great company to work for," said



north of where the road makes a 90 degree turn to the east.

Schuchart.

Fitzgerald has organized the Medina County Environmental Action Association. The group met on Jan. 28 with 67 people in attendance, including Precinct 1 Commissioner Boyce Hartmann. It was Hartmann who forwarded the group's request to place the matter on the commissioners court agenda.

"We feel that the county should take our side," said Fitzgerald. "They could have listened to us," he said.

Currently, the county has no zoning restrictions or ordinances preventing the establishment of a private quarry," page 3

Thurman and Director Jeanette Williams were to meet with an election expert Feb. 2.

"We're more or less decided to do it just the way we did in 1998," Thurman said. BMA converted to single member precincts in 1997.

Thurman said he didn't think there was time to decide who was eligible to vote and wasn't sure how to make that determination.

Up for re-election this year are directors Paul Marbach, Ted Kohlmeier and John Ward.

Director Grace Hitzelder, also up for re-election, resigned in January. No replacement has been appointed.

Southwest Cross Files on NLRB Day

CASTROVILLE--City Administrator Donna Schuchart confirmed that a southern cross flag, also

Homeowners protest proposed Quihi limestone quarry

Continued from Page 1

vate business engaged in activities that do not violate state or federal laws. However, the proposed quarry will have to meet the guidelines of the Texas Natural Resources Conservation Commission to receive a permit for construction and operation. This, however, provides cold comfort for Fitzgerald. "The TNRC has a competent model for permit application, and if Vulcan follows that model, they will receive their permit easily,"

he said.

Fitzgerald said that environmental issues are the focus of his group's concern. "There will be blasting. There will be clouds of dust in the air. People's health will be affected. Asthmatics will have a particularly hard time breathing," he said. "In addition, area wells will be affected with possible contamination of drinking water. And the Medina dam is only seven miles away. Prior studies have shown that it already has fractures. Who

knows how much the blasting will harm the dam?" said Fitzgerald.

Tom Ransdale, president of Vulcan's southwest division was at an industry conference and unavailable for comment. Schuchart expressed disappointment at the group's viewpoint of the quarry. The attorney, a life-long resident of the county, made it clear that he was speaking from his own observation rather than as an official spokesman for Vulcan. "It is disappointing that infor-

mation from this group is not totally true and is being used to incite others. The Fitzgeralds were invited by Vulcan officials to tour one of their other quarries in San Antonio and instead of doing so, they have a meeting and form a group to fight the project," he said.

Schuchart said that he lives in close proximity to several quarries not operated by Vulcan near Medina Lake. "We've never had a problem living near these quarries," he said. "Vulcan is a good corporate citizen,

and they have an impeccable environmental record. I hope and pray that this project takes off. I can't think of another like it that will have such a positive economic impact on our county," said Schuchart.

Fitzgerald said that his

group will meet again tonight at 7 PM at the Quihi Gun Club. "Anyone interested in this issue from both sides is welcome," he said.

PUBLIC NOTICES

Bid Notice

The Manila L.S.D. will accept bids for the purchase of a new 77 passenger, long wheel base, school bus. Bid information can be picked up at the Manila L.S.D.

Donald L. Wright

ALD L. WRIGHT

for the Estate

DO NOT

Attorney

State

Medina Valley
Times
Article and
Letter to the
Editor

2/2/00

Ref. 41

Medina Valley Times
February 2, 2000

tion while the ship is going down.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Quarry would be harmful to area

Editor:

The proposed opening of a huge limestone quarry in north central Medina County is, and should be, of serious concern to the people of this area and also to the Commissioners Court.

Situated over the recharge zone of the aquifer, this project has only recently been discovered by a few citizens. After an attempt to learn about this project by asking it to be placed on the Commissioners Court agenda was denied by Judge Montgomery in December of 1999, a large group of area citizens called the Medina County Environmental Association was formed. Its members subsequently asked Commissioner Royce Hartmann to place it on the Commissioners Court agenda, due to its adverse impact on the county.

On Jan. 31, a request by Precinct 1 Commissioner Hartmann to have the mat-

ter placed on the agenda was again denied by Judge Montgomery. He stated that this was a private matter and did not concern the Commissioners Court. He further stated that any attempt to speak by visitors at the meeting would be held in contempt of court.

In my opinion, this matter is of grave concern for the following reasons: it will adversely affect our water, our lives, our air, our safety, as well as our property. Our aquifer will be in constant jeopardy from contamination from diesel fuel and other contaminants.

It is true that a project of such magnitude will provide an estimated 125 jobs paying approximately \$24,000 per year at peak operation. It is true that it could possibly provide approximately \$450,000 annually in ad valorem taxes at the full completion of the facility. However, this amount is far outweighed by the loss in value of the properties in this huge area, and the health risks it imposes on our citizens. It will also pay

a few landowners handsomely for the destruction of their property. Consider what it will do for their neighbors' properties, however. The peace and quiet of the county will be disrupted for the next 50 years by the mining, processing and transportation of two hundred million tons. Our lands will be divided by 80-foot wide easements for railroad tracks, some of which will be built on high ugly berms. Gravel trucks will menace traffic and tear up our roads. Long, slow moving trains, which will make one to three runs per day (up to six, round trip), will have to blow their whistles as they cross our county roads. This noise and blasting will have an adverse effect on our wildlife. Air pollution from dust and smoke will aggravate respiratory diseases such as asthma and emphysema.

According to Judge Montgomery, none of this is the county's business, and therefore it won't appear on the county agenda. If it's not the county's business I would like to ask the Judge why

Vulcan Materials' Southwest Division President Thomas Ransdale, and project manager Darrell Brownlow met with him and two commissioners?

Judge, if it isn't your business it's mine, and those of us who still have property rights and freedom of speech. It is wrong not to allow people to speak to the court when the people have requested such a hearing. The Commissioners Court is supposed to represent us as well as govern us. Voters, remember this when you vote for your County Judge and Commissioners.

In closing, Judge Montgomery, you advised me, "If you have a problem with Vulcan Materials, you should work it out with them." Since an answer would have been in contempt of your court, I will tell you now that we will do all we can to protect our homes, health and the heritage of Medina County. I, for one, do not wish to see Medina County turned into a huge limestone quarry.

Robert T. Fitzgerald

Playing by the rules

Rules are important. Since the first man walked out of the forest and

ments have been designated in California and Arizona, and the rules for how to use tens of millions more acres in federal land have been made

confused the public.

It's not the first time that the White House has taken a shortcut around Capitol Hill to get something done. The

2/3/2000
MEDINA VALLEY TIMES